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# **AUTOSPORT**

# **LEWIS APPLIES THE PRESSURE**



*But Rosberg  
avoids the  
Mexico chaos*



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# Rosberg saves, Vettel gets angry, Ogier stars

WELL, HE DID IT AGAIN. NICO ROSBERG MAY NOT BE matching Lewis Hamilton at the moment, but he is getting the results he needs. In Mexico, he once again pulled a second place out of the bag when it seemed he might be under threat.

Having Max Verstappen behind him is probably the last thing Rosberg wants over the past few races. The Red Bull star always tries something, which is one of the characteristics that make him exciting to watch. And a nightmare for the other drivers.

His move on Rosberg at Turn 4 last weekend was bold, but fair, and didn't work. Verstappen damaged his car too, which led to him being sucked back towards Sebastian Vettel. That meant Rosberg was out of range when things got dramatic late on.

Ultimately, the stewards probably got it right. Verstappen would have lost third had he not cut the track at the first chicane, while Vettel did break the new rules under braking as he defended from a charging Daniel Ricciardo. Vettel's level of fury during the race was surprising – is it simply that Verstappen has got under his skin, or is it indicative of troubles behind the scenes at Ferrari?

Someone else who has been (unfairly) accused of moaning in 2016 is Sebastien Ogier. The World Rally benchmark has had to sweep the stages too often this season, limiting him to 'only' six wins, but proved his class once again on Rally GB. Whether it's the FIA trying to stop him winning or being on unfancied tyres, Ogier finds a way of coming out on top.



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## COVER IMAGES

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## COVER STORY

**4** Mexican Grand Prix report and analysis

## PIT+PADDOCK

- 20** Audi's shock pull-out; VW follows suit
- 22** Drivers battle for Haas F1 seat
- 24** BTCC rule change could peg Subaru
- 26** Feedback: your letters
- 27** Ian Parkes: in the F1 paddock
- 29** Gary Watkins: in the WEC paddock

## FEATURES AND REPORTS

- 30** Ogier shows his class on Rally GB
- 40** How Stroll conquered European F3

## RACE CENTRE

- 48** MotoGP; FV8 3.5; Asian Le Mans Series; NASCAR Sprint Cup; Super Formula

## CLUB AUTOSPORT

- 63** RML eyes Prototype Cup entry
- 64** American champ set for British F3
- 66** Carroll changes engine for Hayes classic
- 67** Humble Pye: the voice of club racing
- 68** National reports: Snetterton; Brands Hatch
- 72** Algarve Classic Festival report
- 74** TOCA supports season review

## FINISHING STRAIGHT

- 78** What's on this week
- 80** From the archive: 1989 German GP
- 82** Bucket List: the NASCAR experience

## AUTOSPORT SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

- 70** Sign up and get FREE KitSound wireless headphones

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# Hamilton wins, Rosberg hangs on

By Edd Straw, Editor-in-Chief [@eddstrawF1](#)

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Hamilton is about to run off track at the start

**LEWIS HAMILTON DOESN'T NEED REMINDING ABOUT THE IMPACT THAT** circumstances outside his control can have on his world championship hopes. While his imperious victory from pole position in the Mexican Grand Prix could not have been more different from the disastrous engine failure he suffered while dominating in Malaysia four weeks earlier, once again serendipity was against him, just in a more subtle way.

In the build-up to the race, Hamilton was asked for an explanation of Nico Rosberg's form this year. Perhaps there was something different about his team-mate that shifted the balance in their previously one-sided competitive relationship. "Nope," shot back Hamilton. "But I've had a lot of failures, that's the only difference."

Rosberg came close to failure of a sort – in fact several sorts – in Mexico. And there's a warning here, for perhaps there is a difference, as the Rosberg even of a few months ago might have allowed those situations to lead to an error. But this time he stood firm.

What if Rosberg had not dug deep and produced his first truly convincing lap of the weekend on the second run in Q3 to jump ahead of the two Red Bulls and qualify second to Hamilton? What if Rosberg had been hit a little bit harder when wheelbanging with Max Verstappen through Turn 1? What if Rosberg had been passed by the Dutch teenager later in the race and dropped to third? What if the Ferraris had made good on their practice promise in qualifying and been in a position to get involved in the battle for second?

Any of those scenarios could have helped Hamilton on a day that, ultimately, didn't do him as much good in the world championship fight as it might have. For Rosberg, finishing second behind

Hamilton is still good enough – in fact, with two races to go he can even take the hit of a third place in one of those grands prix. So what, Hamilton might ask himself, does he have to do to cop a break?

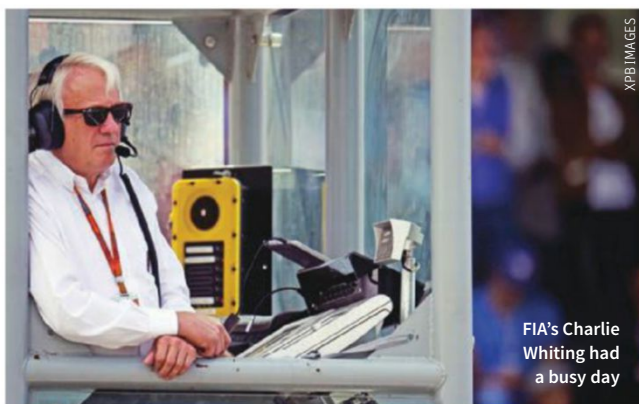
It was a brake of a different kind that created the one criticism Hamilton had to answer after the race. On the run to the first corner, having initially repulsed the attack of Verstappen, who attempted to capitalise on the theoretical 12-metre advantage of starting on super-soft-compound Pirellis versus the softs both Mercedes drivers began the race on, Hamilton grabbed the front-right brake. A big lock-up ensued, and he torpedoed across the runoff area, rejoining at Turn 3 with the lead intact.

Hamilton blamed a glazed front-right brake disc for this, claiming he had 500C in the front-left brake, and a maximum of 200C on the other side of the axle. Given the lead advantage he emerged with, there were several observers who were surprised he escaped not only without a penalty, but also without the stewards even looking at it. As Nico Hulkenberg, who had a box seat for the incident, said: "If you have a glazed brake then it will be glazed for the rest of the race, so I'm surprised how he still won it..."

For the only time during the whole weekend, Rosberg saw his

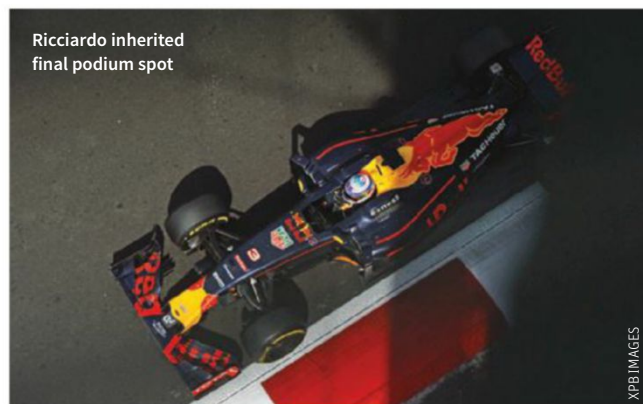


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FIA's Charlie Whiting had a busy day

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Ricciardo inherited final podium spot

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chance to seize the initiative. But with Hamilton easing off the brake, protecting the tyre and avoiding having to make the first-lap pitstop that a bigger flatspot would have demanded, it wasn't to be.

"I was excited at that point because I thought, 'OK, I've got him,'" said Rosberg. "That was some pretty late braking there! But he floored it through the grass and that's that. Again, that's not for me to judge."

The implication is that Rosberg judged it to be worthy of a penalty, but you can't blame Hamilton for taking that slice of good fortune. Conversely, given that Rosberg and Verstappen were having their own side-by-side moment behind him, it was probably for the best that the race did not get distorted by a penalty. Hamilton, of course, gave the suggestion of such a thing short shrift.

"I had a complete flat-spotted tyre, so that definitely wasn't an advantage," he said. "I think I was still in the lead going in, so I was in the lead coming out."

Hamilton and Mercedes faced a difficult decision, for what team boss Toto Wolff described as "scary vibrations metrics" suggested the front-right Pirelli's flat spot might be too severe. The championship situation led to the gamble being taken to leave Hamilton out, and it paid off. As for Rosberg, he was more concerned about the after-effects of the collision with Verstappen.

"He went over the limit, locked up the front tyre, ran wide and shoved me off the track," said Rosberg. "It doesn't look that big on TV, but feeling-wise it was a massive impact. I thought, 'OK, my car is done'. My steering actually had a bit of an offset after that, but >>>



Verstappen hunted down Rosberg for second

penalty or not... that's not for me to judge."

Again, the meaning is clear. But even before the steering damage Rosberg was only ever going to be racing for second. Hamilton had a clear pace advantage in his back pocket, so much so that the 0.254-second gap in qualifying arguably flattered his team-mate. When things got going again after the safety car was deployed to clear up the Manor of Pascal Wehrlein, who had been ejected from the race when contact with Esteban Gutierrez's Haas at Turn 2 pitched him into Marcus Ericsson's Sauber, the race was reset.

And Rosberg had absolutely nothing to offer. By lap nine, the sixth after the safety car, Hamilton had a handy 3s cushion.

From there, things were very simple. By the time Hamilton pitted at the end of lap 17, to remove the softs and put on a set of mediums to run to the end, his advantage was 5.6s over Rosberg.

Hamilton rejoined fourth, with the Ferraris of Kimi Raikkonen and Sebastian Vettel, both on softs, separating him from his team-mate. Here, Rosberg paid a double penalty for his lack of Hamiltonesque pace, for he had to stay out a little longer. This wasn't some chancer's attempt to remain out and somehow pull a gap over Hamilton, for that wasn't possible. Instead it was about pulling enough of a gap to be sure that he would emerge from the pits clear of the Williams of Valtteri Bottas and the Red Bull of Daniel Ricciardo, the Australian having opted to pit under the safety car at the end of the first lap and switch to mediums.

When Rosberg pitted at the end of lap 20 of 71 (inevitably, Hamilton had posted what was then the fastest lap of the race on

his fresh mediums), he re-emerged a further second behind his team-mate. And, crucially, he was only 3s ahead of Ricciardo. Hamilton was gone — at least he was once illusory leader Vettel had finished his extra-long first stint on softs, which he justifiably extended unilaterally from the cockpit against instruction from the pitwall. Mercedes held firm on its one-stop strategy, facilitated by the negligible wear and thermal degradation of the medium Pirellis. But while Hamilton cruised to victory, Rosberg had some problems to deal with.

Red Bull added to these problems dramatically by making Ricciardo cede what became third place to Verstappen after Vettel had pitted. Verstappen had medium tyres that were 11 laps fresher, and it took a long time — almost 30 laps — for him to close that 3s gap to Rosberg. But with 21 laps to go he was in DRS range of the Mercedes for the first time and wasn't going to miss out on the opportunity

## “Verstappen’s hold on second place lasted all of two seconds”

presented by Rosberg locking up while preparing to lap Daniil Kvyat's Toro Rosso into Turn 1.

Rosberg went deep, also compromising his entry to the Turn 2/3 left/right chicane, and that meant Verstappen had a run in the second DRS zone to the Turn 4 left-hander. The ever-aggressive Red Bull driver broke left to dive up the inside, but left it too late, locking up and running deep off the track. Verstappen's hold on second place lasted all of two seconds and Rosberg suddenly found himself with a 2.5s advantage. What's more, Verstappen subsequently clouted a kerb and shed a few front-wing parts, which effectively meant the battle for second was over. Rosberg





S. BLOXHAM/LAT



HONE/LAT

had delivered the second place he needed.

Without that break, Rosberg could easily have become embroiled in the contentious battle for third that enlivened the closing stages of the race. Vettel, who also might have been in a stronger position in this fight had he not spent the first 14 laps wedged under the rear wing of Felipe Massa's Williams, had a 20-lap tyre-life advantage over Verstappen and was coming into play.

With fourth-placed Ricciardo opting to pit at the end of lap 50 to take on softs, which would bring him into the podium hunt in the closing laps, Vettel was in fourth place and 5.6s behind Verstappen. That gap rose to 6.3s by the end of lap 56, when >>

**Raikkonen was running well before second pitstop**

## QUALIFYING



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SO, WAS THE POLE POSITION LAP "BRILLIANT", WHICH IS WHAT second-placed Mercedes driver Nico Rosberg called it, or was it the "worst session of the whole weekend so far", as pacesetter Lewis Hamilton claimed? Well, it was a bit of both.

Hamilton was always the favourite for pole, and the fact that Rosberg had to dig deep to deliver a lap 0.254s slower than his team-mate's to secure second on the grid tells its own story. On the first runs in Q3, Rosberg was behind the Red Bulls of Max Verstappen and Daniel Ricciardo, and it was only a gain of 0.305s on his second run that redressed the situation.

Hamilton's pace was certainly outstanding. From the off in practice he looked to have the measure of Rosberg. In Q3 his comfort with the car paid off as he controlled a few lurid moments in conditions where everyone else was struggling to make things work – the most spectacular being on the entry to the Esses.

Of his three personal-best sectors, he only delivered one on his pole lap – in sector one. His fastest second sector had come in Q2 on the soft rubber, while the fastest in sector three was on his second attempt in Q3. Remarkably, that second Q3 lap was only six thousandths slower than his first!

A 1m18.420s lap – more than doubling the gap to Rosberg – was theoretically possible. But the real genius of Hamilton's performance was that grip levels and tyre troubles encountered by everybody really did make Q3 incredibly difficult. And in the worst conditions of the weekend Hamilton delivered two laps good enough for pole at near-identical pace. That is brilliance.

Rosberg's salvage job was also critical in terms of the battle for the drivers' championship, but it wasn't until Saturday afternoon that he found the performance to take second.

"Some weekends you find your way straight away and others it takes a bit longer to find the rhythm," explained Rosberg. "This was one of those where it took all the way to qualifying to get there. The unique thing about this weekend is the tyres are just cold all the time. That's why you've seen so many ups and downs."

Ricciardo, who qualified fourth behind Verstappen as both managed only very marginal improvements on their second Q3 runs, described this as one of the worst top-10 shootouts of his career for exactly this reason. For both him and his team-mate, the car was all over the place on the second Q3 run as they struggled to get the tyres working well.

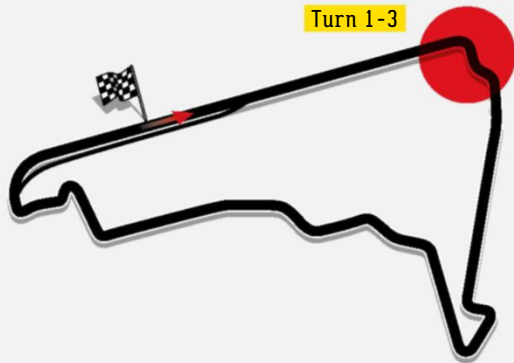
It was a similar story at Ferrari, where Kimi Raikkonen and Sebastian Vettel ended up sixth and seventh respectively. Like the Mercedes duo, both Ferrari drivers set their fastest Q2 times on soft tyres.

The stars of qualifying were Nico Hulkenberg and Pascal Wehrlein. The Force India driver took fifth with what he described as his best lap of the season, while the Manor man put in a stunning last lap in Q1 to reach the second stage of qualifying.

**"Rosberg's salvage job was critical in terms of the fight for the title"**



“YOU CAN SEE HOW HARD THE DRIVERS ARE TRYING TO GET THE CAR TO DO THEIR BIDDING”



**THE AUTODROMO**  
Hermanos Rodriguez in Mexico City is no ordinary circuit. Located 2250m (7400ft) above sea level, the air is around 20% less dense, so high wing levels deliver only Monza-like downforce numbers. Add to that a low-grip track surface that, to the shock of Pirelli and the teams, had not improved since the first grand prix at the revived track last year.

Heading to the first complex of corners, comprising a heavy brake from over 220mph to around 60mph for the

right-hander, closely followed by a tight left/right chicane, offers an interesting insight into the drivers' process of adaptation.

There are plenty of lock-ups, some overcommit and run wide, some lose the rear, some struggle to get the nose in. If you're unfortunate enough to drive a Renault, it's a nightmare to get the front end in, before the rear wallows its way through the second part of the corner.

Lewis Hamilton is immediately impressive. On his first set of tyres, the rear snaps away under braking but he controls it brilliantly. Were



Bottas's braking commitment pays off with a consistent line

you not standing on the inside on the approach to the corner looking at the rear of the car, you would barely notice it.

Many spend a lot of time modifying their lines, being more or less aggressive on the brakes. One who stands out is Williams driver Valtteri Bottas, who is committed when he puts his left foot down and is

able to take a very consistent line. Team-mate Felipe Massa, by contrast, is ragged. Several times he takes an aggressive stab on the throttle in the brief strip of asphalt connecting Turn 1 to Turn 2, meaning he runs wide in the chicane and drops over the crown of the road, compromising his exit.

From the inside of the exit

of Turn 1 you can see how hard drivers are trying to get the car to do their bidding, with multiple steering inputs and plenty of throttle fiddling. Even at slow speed, anyone arguing that it's too easy to drive a modern F1 car will be quickly disabused of such a notion.

**EDD STRAW**



Vettel celebrated, then lost his place on the podium

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Hamilton jumps for joy, but he's still trailing Rosberg



Vettel started his attack. Over the next 11 laps Vettel painstakingly hauled himself into DRS range, with an average laptime gain of 0.137s – this was good, old-fashioned grand prix racing, decided by a matter of a tenth or two here and there each lap.

With four laps to go, Vettel was within DRS range for the first time and closed rapidly on Verstappen on the run to Turn 1. Verstappen defended, locked up and charged across the grass, holding onto third. But he would later pick up a 5s penalty for gaining an unfair advantage.

“It is pretty similar to what happened on lap one,” said Verstappen. “Lewis ran off, he gained a massive advantage. Nico also went off in Turn 1 when we touched and he also gained an advantage. I didn’t even gain an advantage. I was still ahead on braking and when I came back on the track I was the same length in front. It’s ridiculous.”

He was initially told via the radio to let Vettel past, although Red Bull team principal Christian Horner subsequently claimed that a message – not subsequently broadcast – followed that up telling Verstappen to hang fire in doing so. This makes more sense than the idea that Verstappen deliberately ignored the order, as it had the benefit of backing Vettel up into Ricciardo, who was charging on soft rubber and circulating over a second a lap faster than Vettel.

On the penultimate lap, with Vettel still furious at Verstappen, Ricciardo had a look up the inside of the Ferrari into Turn 4. Vettel moved left in the braking zone – contrary to the rule clarification

explicitly prohibiting this manoeuvre issued at the United States GP a week earlier – and Ricciardo did a stunning job to avoid torpedoing the Ferrari. Both survived, but the shenanigans of the final four laps served to turn the original finishing order – Verstappen, Vettel, Ricciardo – on its head.

First, Verstappen was given his penalty. Then Vettel, who stood on the podium, was given a 10s penalty for moving in the braking area while defending from Ricciardo. The result was Ricciardo third, Verstappen fourth, Vettel fifth. Cue Ferrari fury, with team principal Maurizio Arrivabene blaming bureaucracy for the loss of third place. A few chairs went flying in the Ferrari hospitality unit as a result of this decision, such was the dismay of certain team members.

Fortunately for Rosberg, he was well clear of this madness, crossing the line just over 8s behind Hamilton and eight clear of Verstappen. He’d dodged the bullets, escaped the scrapes and banked the points he needed on a weekend when Hamilton reigned supreme.

“It was not really damage limitation,” said Rosberg. “I was going for the win, it didn’t work out. Lewis did a great job; he was a little bit faster all weekend. I accept it. It’s OK.”

Hamilton’s joy cannot fail but be tempered by Rosberg avoiding the pitfalls to take second. As he said, “Nico is doing a great job to pull in the position that he has to finish” – and time is running out for the kinds of problems Hamilton needs Rosberg to have if he’s to take a fourth world championship. ❁

**“Lewis did a great job. He was a little bit faster all weekend. I accept it”**



## Sainz penalised for forcing Alonso off

CARLOS SAINZ WAS HIT with a five-second penalty for forcing McLaren driver Fernando Alonso onto the grass on the first lap of the race.

The Toro Rosso driver drifted left on the run out of Turn 3 while Alonso's front-right wheel had a slight overlap.

Alonso took to the grass, coming close to spinning before gathering up the McLaren, describing the incident as "not very fair". But Sainz believed the penalty was harsh.

"It's probably on the harsh side, because at the start you cannot look 360 degrees," said Sainz.

"When I saw him I saw him late, but it's not like he was side by side with me. The overlap was pretty small, and he took it flat-out – good for him, it was brave.

"I've seen people not get a penalty for much worse.

"If I put Fernando in a dangerous situation I'm sorry for that, but it's racing, it's lap one. I'm not going to give up my position for free, especially when I'm nearly one full car [length] ahead.

"You never expect to have one guy there, close to a kerb on traction with the soft tyre, when you have more grip on the super-soft."

Sainz went on to finish 16th, while Alonso was 13th after a two-stop race compromised by traffic, the need to turn down his engine to prevent it failing late on and a stuck wheelnut at his second stop.



# Vettel first driver punished under new defending law

SEBASTIAN VETTEL'S PENALTY for illegal defending while trying to hold off Daniel Ricciardo on the penultimate lap of the race is the first punishment for infringing new rules brought in at the United States Grand Prix a week earlier.

The new rule prohibits late moves under braking that force another driver to take evasive action, with Vettel clearly changing his line into the left-hander and coming close to causing a collision with Ricciardo.

Vettel crossed the line fourth. But he moved up to third after Max Verstappen was given a penalty for gaining an advantage by cutting the track at the first corner while defending from the Ferrari driver. Vettel's 10-second penalty then relegated him to fifth, with Ricciardo taking the final podium slot ahead of Verstappen.

The stewards' decision read: "The telemetry and video evidence shows that the driver of car 5 did change direction under braking.

"Article 27.5 and the race director's notes have essentially

three criteria that determine a breach: driving in a manner potentially dangerous, an abnormal change of direction and another driver having to take evasive action.

"The video footage, including the close circuit footage, the broadcast vision, both drivers' onboard cameras plus the telemetry show that there was an abnormal change of direction by car 5 and this was considered to be potentially dangerous in view of the proximity of the wheels of each car.

"The video evidence clearly shows that car 3 had to take evasive action as a result.

"Accordingly as all three criteria have been met, the driver of car 5 is guilty of a breach of article 27.5."

Ferrari team principal Maurizio Arrivabene hit out at the penalty: "I'm surprised [by the decision]. We gained a podium on the track and they removed it with their bureaucracy – fantastic.

"When they give a five or 10-second penalty, you can't appeal. You have to take what they decide."



## Hamilton close to crashing at first corner

LEWIS HAMILTON SAID HE WAS lucky not to crash when he suffered his front-right brake lockup at the start of the race.

The Mercedes driver cut across the runoff area and rejoined still in the lead ahead of team-mate Nico Rosberg, but said he could easily have crashed.

"On the formation lap I had

a glazed right-front brake, I just couldn't wake it up," said Hamilton.

"I had 500C in the left-front and 150-200C in the right-front. So I went into Turn 1 and the right-front just locked.

"I was carrying so much speed there I was lucky I didn't go into the wall or something."

He was then worried about the

damage caused by the locked wheel. "After that I had the biggest vibration, I didn't know if I was going to be able to make the first stint [without pitting early]," he said.

"I thought I would have to stop. The vibration was so big I could barely see. It was nice when I got some fresh tyres – it was much smoother."





XPB IMAGES



SBLOXHAM/LAT

## Hulkenberg survives late spin for seventh after star drive

NICO HULKENBERG SURVIVED A spin while attempting to hold off Ferrari driver Kimi Raikkonen in the closing stages of the race to take seventh.

The Force India ace overachieved in qualifying to start ahead of both Raikkonen and Sebastian Vettel, the Ferrari drivers struggling with tyres.

Running fourth early on, Hulkenberg slipped back to seventh after the first round of stops, but moved to sixth when Raikkonen stopped again on lap 45. Raikkonen then attacked around the outside of Turn 4 with five laps to go, completing the pass as Hulkenberg spun.

"I tried to hang onto it, but no chance," said Hulkenberg. "I was braking on the inside on the dirty part, totally on the limit. Kimi comes round the outside on fresh boots and just turns in on me. Where do you expect me to go?"

Hulkenberg's advantage meant he rejoined easily ahead of eighth-placed Williams driver Valtteri Bottas, ensuring Force India gained another point on the team in their battle for fourth in the constructors' championship.

Team-mate Sergio Perez finished 10th, behind the other Williams of Felipe Massa.

## Q&A

### MARCUS ERICSSON SAUBER DRIVER



Marcus Ericsson recovered from having to pit for a new nose at the end of lap one after being hit by Pascal Wehrlein's Manor to take 11th place – a race the Sauber man described as his best.

#### **You drove a great race to 11th, but is it frustrating to have missed out on a point?**

That was the race of my career so far, it was amazing. After the start collision, we had a damaged front wing and then quite a bit of damage on the right side of the floor. We lost six or eight points of rear downforce from that collision. We went back out and we didn't know if we would have any pace and, somehow, it was really good. I managed to keep the pace in the tyres for the whole race on the medium set. It was such a good race but, yes, still so frustrating to be there in 11th.

#### **Were you hoping for a car ahead to drop out?**

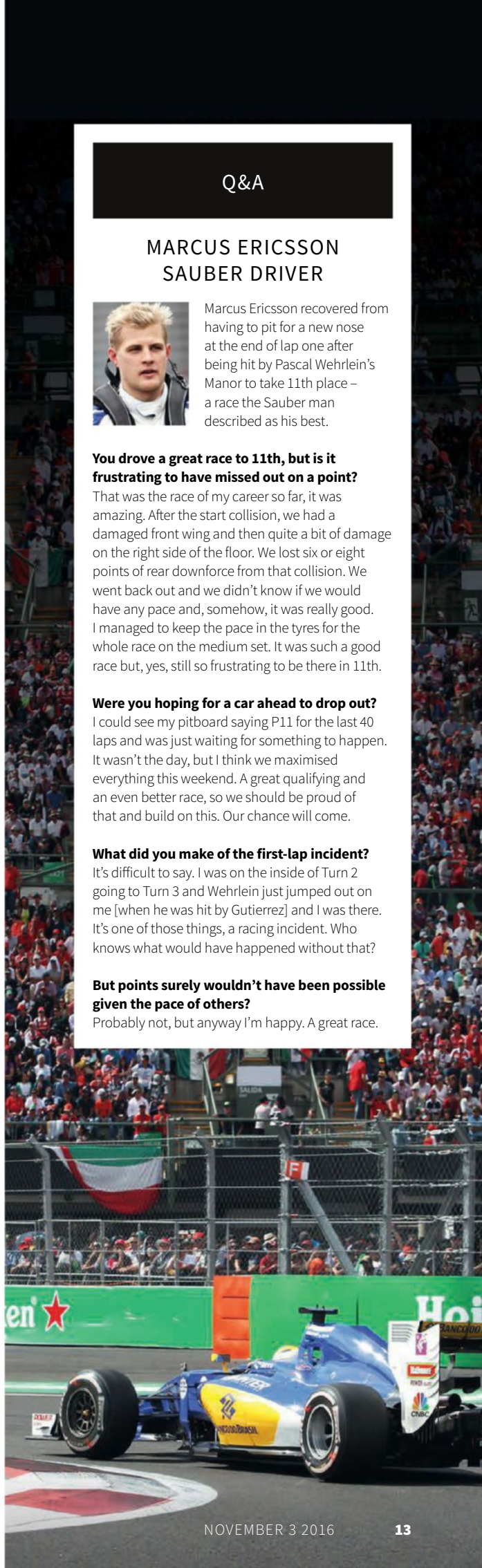
I could see my pitboard saying P11 for the last 40 laps and was just waiting for something to happen. It wasn't the day, but I think we maximised everything this weekend. A great qualifying and an even better race, so we should be proud of that and build on this. Our chance will come.

#### **What did you make of the first-lap incident?**

It's difficult to say. I was on the inside of Turn 2 going to Turn 3 and Wehrlein just jumped out on me [when he was hit by Gutierrez] and I was there. It's one of those things, a racing incident. Who knows what would have happened without that?

#### **But points surely wouldn't have been possible given the pace of others?**

Probably not, but anyway I'm happy. A great race.



XPB IMAGES

## Wehrlein blames Gutierrez for crash

PASCAL WEHRLEIN HELD HAAS driver Esteban Gutierrez responsible for the first-lap collision that eliminated him from the race.

Wehrlein started 16th after putting in a stellar lap to reach Q2, with no fresh rubber left, but did not make it past the third corner.

The German was on the outside going into the Turn 2 left-hander, with Sauber driver Marcus Ericsson on the inside and Gutierrez

in-between the pair.

Gutierrez's front-right made contact with the rear of Wehrlein, pitching the Manor into a spin that fired it into the Sauber.

The damage put Wehrlein out, while Ericsson was able to finish 11th after pitting for a new nosecone.

"He just braked too late," said Wehrlein. "He was locking up his tyres and he touched me."

"There was a car inside of him,

but it is not a corner where three cars can go round."

Stewards investigated the incident, but opted to take no action against Gutierrez, who vehemently denied being at fault.

"No," he said of the Manor driver's claim that he braked too late. "There was no way I could avoid the contact. I had a Sauber on the left and he was on the right and it was like being squeezed between two cars."



## Palmer damages car in practice

JOLYON PALMER RECOVERED from missing qualifying as a result of chassis damage to turn in a strong race performance in Mexico.

The 25-year-old finished 14th after starting 21st, showing good race pace on a 70-lap stint on medium Pirellis after stopping at the end of lap 1.

This was in a car built up around a spare monocoque after Palmer clouted the exit kerb at the final corner on his third lap of Saturday morning practice, causing a crack in the left side of the chassis next to the seatbelt mounting.

"The touch we did on the kerb really wasn't that big," he said. "I knew there would be a bit of floor damage, but at no point did it cross my mind that it could have been any more than that."

"Coming out of the last corner, I just dropped a wheel about an inch the other side and it was just enough to straddle [the kerb]."



## Haas suffers worst weekend in Mexico

HAAS ENDURED WHAT TEAM PRINCIPAL Gunther Steiner described as its "worst weekend", with Esteban Gutierrez and Romain Grosjean finishing in 19th and 20th places respectively.

Both suffered from balance and brake problems, despite a change of Brembo material, with Grosjean particularly badly hit and changing to an older-spec floor before the race, which did not solve his difficulties.

"We know what's wrong – we could not find the balance, we were all over the place, we were outside of the tyre window," said Steiner. "We just didn't perform this weekend."

"We just need to get our act together again in the next two races. We got into Q3 two races ago, so where did it go? We don't know."

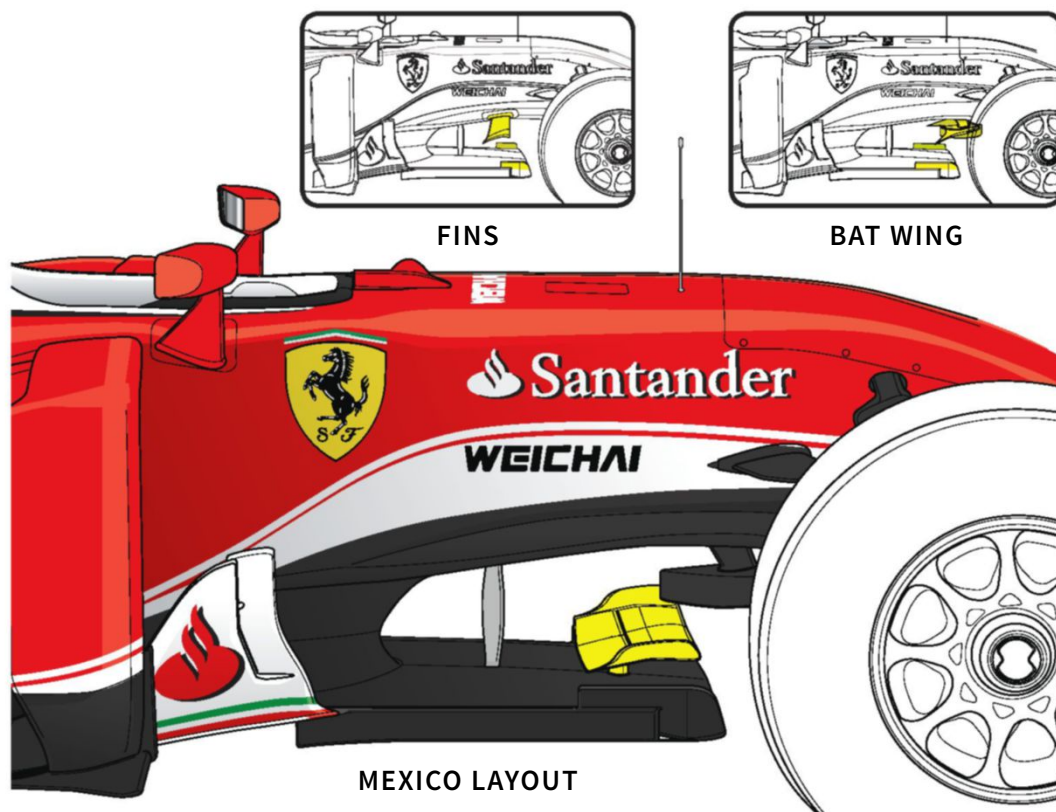
Haas will trial Carbone Industrie brakes on one of its cars at the forthcoming Brazilian Grand Prix.

## FERRARI TRIES RED BULL-STYLE BAT WING

Ferrari continues to investigate the area under the raised portion of its chassis, having made two previous updates in this area since Silverstone. First it was with a pair of simple fins, then a Mercedes-style, hanging bat wing. For Mexico the team introduced another bat wing, more like Red Bull's idea.

The concept remains the same – an upturned wing profile under the chassis that produces vortices at its wing tips to part the airflow around the car. But this time the bat wing sits lower and mounts to the T-tray splitter underneath.

The revised mounting strut may be merely pragmatic, due to the lower position, but equally the lift the wing creates may help increase ground clearance of the leading edge of the splitter, offsetting the high pressure naturally produced above the splitter and preventing it from deflecting downwards at speed.

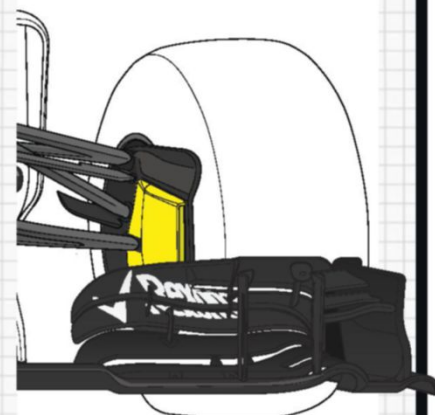
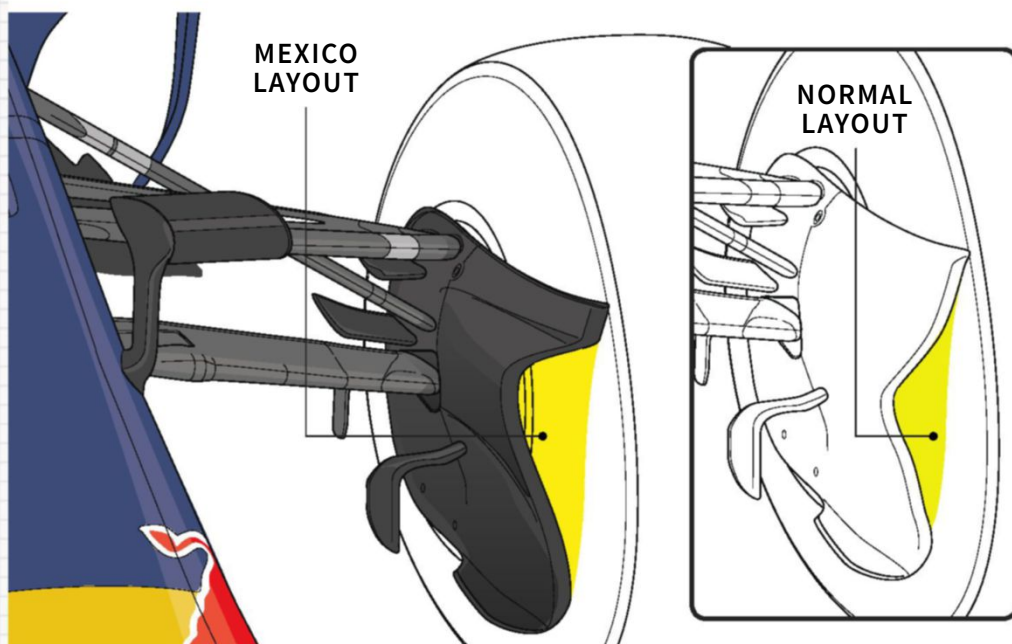


## TORO ROSSO RESHAPES ITS BRAKE DUCTS...

With the thin atmosphere at Mexico City's altitude, Toro Rosso adjusted its brake ducts to keep the brakes cooled. The team normally uses a 'scoopless' brake-

duct design – whereby the air is fed into the brake in between the duct and tyre, rather than with a scoop sticking out into the airflow – so the outer duct shape had to be

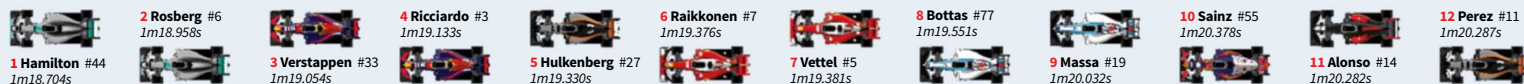
changed. In Mexico, the forward protruding section of duct was reshaped to form a more traditional scoop, without needing to re-engineer the entire duct.



## ...AND WILLIAMS ADDS SCOOPS TO COOL BRAKES

Another team to alter its brake ducts – also usually following the 'scoopless' design – Williams found a slightly different solution to the brake-cooling issue in Mexico. Rather than reshaping the outer duct shape, it simply added a scoop to the duct's outer face. This fed more air into the internal ducts to cool the brakes.

# F1/MEXICAN GRAND PRIX RESULTS



## Race results / 71 laps – 189.747 miles

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES	TIME IN PITS
1	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	1h40m31.402s	56	●●	21.709s
2	Nico Rosberg	Mercedes	+8.354s	3	●●	21.997s
3	Daniel Ricciardo	Red Bull-Renault	+20.858s		●●●	44.530s
4	Max Verstappen	Red Bull-Renault	+21.323s		●●	21.775s
5	Sebastian Vettel	Ferrari	+27.313s	12	●●	22.035s
6	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari	+49.376s		●●●	45.372s
7	Nico Hulkenberg	Force India-Mercedes	+58.891s		●●	22.134s
8	Valtteri Bottas	Williams-Mercedes	+1m05.612s		●●	22.396s
9	Felipe Massa	Williams-Mercedes	+1m16.206s		●●	21.863s
10	Sergio Perez	Force India-Mercedes	+1m16.798s		●●	22.213s
11	Marcus Ericsson	Sauber-Ferrari	-1 lap		●●	32.608s
12	Jenson Button	McLaren-Honda	-1 lap		●●	22.438s
13	Fernando Alonso	McLaren-Honda	-1 lap		●●●	47.632s
14	Jolyon Palmer	Renault	-1 lap		●●●	23.897s
15	Felipe Nasr	Sauber-Ferrari	-1 lap		●●●	23.540s
16	Carlos Sainz	Toro Rosso-Ferrari	-1 lap		●●	22.747s
17	Kevin Magnussen	Renault	-1 lap		●●●	44.655s
18	Daniil Kvyat	Toro Rosso-Ferrari	-1 lap		●●●	45.530s
19	Esteban Gutierrez	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap		●●●	48.308s
20	Romain Grosjean	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap		●●●	46.635s
21	Esteban Ocon	Manor-Mercedes	-2 laps		●●	23.866s
R	Pascal Wehrlein	Manor-Mercedes	0 laps-collision		●	-

## Fastest laps

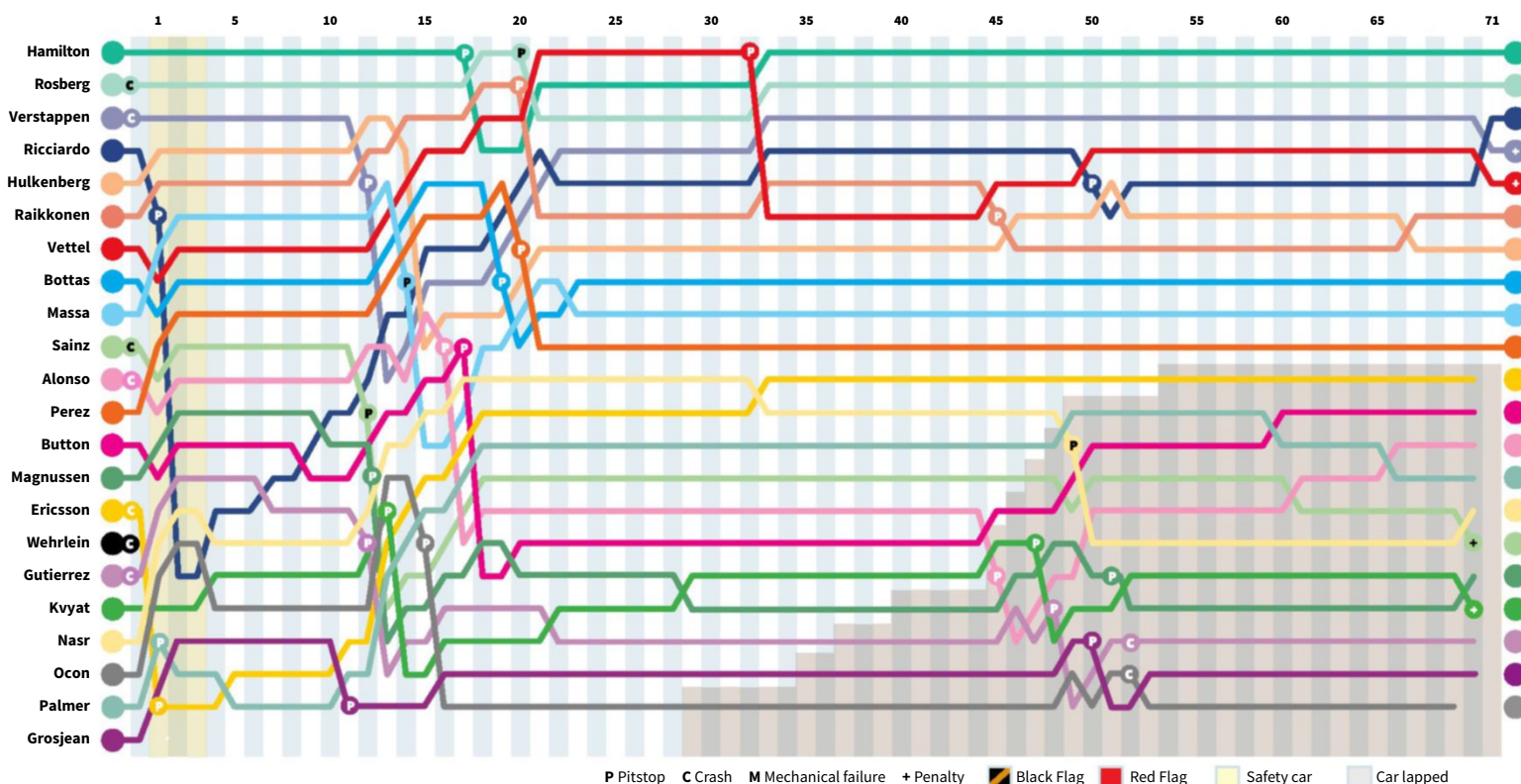
POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Ricciardo	1m21.134s	-	53
2	Vettel	1m22.497s	+1.363s	61
3	Raikkonen	1m22.512s	+1.378s	47
4	Hamilton	1m22.596s	+1.462s	66
5	Rosberg	1m22.792s	+1.658s	43
6	Verstappen	1m22.887s	+1.753s	66
7	Magnussen	1m23.146s	+2.012s	53
8	Grosjean	1m23.278s	+2.144s	53
9	Hulkenberg	1m23.288s	+2.154s	50
10	Gutierrez	1m23.456s	+2.322s	63
11	Bottas	1m23.540s	+2.406s	65
12	Massa	1m23.576s	+2.442s	64
13	Perez	1m23.607s	+2.473s	62
14	Kvyat	1m23.618s	+2.484s	59
15	Nasr	1m23.657s	+2.523s	58
16	Alonso	1m23.668s	+2.534s	69
17	Button	1m23.777s	+2.643s	70
18	Ericsson	1m24.340s	+3.206s	65
19	Sainz	1m24.467s	+3.333s	52
20	Palmer	1m24.574s	+3.440s	64
21	Ocon	1m24.964s	+3.830s	43
22	Wehrlein	-	-	-

WEATHER Sunny; track 47C, air 18C WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 113.250mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 118.665mph

● New ○ Used ● Ultra-soft ● Super-soft ● Soft ● Medium ● Hard ● Wet ● Intermediate

<h3>11</h3> <p>Ericsson's 11th place was Sauber's best finish of the 2016 season</p>	<h3>17</h3> <p>Mercedes set a new record for victories in a season, beating its own record of 16 wins in 2014</p>	<h3>18</h3> <p>Mercedes equalled the record it already shared with Red Bull for pole positions in a season</p>	<h3>50</h3> <p>This GP marked the 50th anniversary of Ron Dennis's first F1 race, working as a mechanic for Cooper</p>	<h3>51</h3> <p>Hamilton is now equal-second in the F1 winners' list, level with Alain Prost</p>	<h3>231.5</h3> <p>Fastest speed in mph officially recorded during the race, set by Bottas's Williams</p>	<h3>150</h3> <p>This was Hamilton's 150th points finish in F1</p>
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## Lap chart / What happened, when







13 Button #22  
1m20.673s

14 Magnussen #20  
1m21.131s

15 Ericsson #9  
1m21.536s

16 Wehrlein #94  
1m21.785s

17 Gutierrez #21  
1m21.401s

18 Kvyat #26  
1m21.454s

19 Nasr #12  
1m21.692s

20 Ocon #31  
1m21.881s

21 Palmer #30  
no time

22 Grosjean #8  
1m21.916s

# SEASON STATS

## Qualifying 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m19.447s
2	Raikkonen	1m19.554s
3	Ricciardo	1m19.713s
4	Vettel	1m19.865s
5	Verstappen	1m19.874s
6	Rosberg	1m19.996s
7	Perez	1m20.308s
8	Bottas	1m20.338s
9	Massa	1m20.423s
10	Sainz	1m20.457s
11	Alonso	1m20.552s
12	Hulkenberg	1m20.599s
13	Ericsson	1m21.062s
14	Magnussen	1m21.254s
15	Button	1m21.333s
16	Wehrlein	1m21.363s
17	Gutierrez	1m21.401s
18	Kvyat	1m21.454s
19	Nasr	1m21.692s
20	Ocon	1m21.881s
21	Grosjean	1m21.916s
22	Palmer	no time

## Qualifying 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m18.972s
2	Hamilton	1m19.137s
3	Vettel	1m19.385s
4	Ricciardo	1m19.553s
5	Rosberg	1m19.761s
6	Hulkenberg	1m19.769s
7	Raikkonen	1m19.936s
8	Bottas	1m19.958s
9	Massa	1m20.151s
10	Sainz	1m20.169s
11	Alonso	1m20.282s
12	Perez	1m20.287s
13	Button	1m20.673s
14	Magnussen	1m21.131s
15	Ericsson	1m21.536s
16	Wehrlein	1m21.785s

## Qualifying 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m18.704s
2	Rosberg	1m18.958s
3	Verstappen	1m19.054s
4	Ricciardo	1m19.133s
5	Hulkenberg	1m19.330s
6	Raikkonen	1m19.376s
7	Vettel	1m19.381s
8	Bottas	1m19.551s
9	Massa	1m20.032s
10	Sainz	1m20.378s

WEATHER Sunny; track 54C, air 19C

## Race briefing

### GRID PENALTIES

**GROSJEAN** started from pits for breaking parc ferme

### RACE PENALTIES

**KVYAT** 5 seconds for gaining advantage going off track

**SAINZ** 5 seconds for forcing Alonso off track

**VERSTAPPEN** 5 seconds for gaining advantage going off track

**VETTEL** 10 seconds for illegal defending

## Speed trap

Fastest for each constructor in qualifying



## Drivers' championship

1	Rosberg	349
2	Hamilton	330
3	Ricciardo	242
4	Vettel	187
5	Raikkonen	178
6	Verstappen	177
7	Perez	85
8	Bottas	85
9	Hulkenberg	60
10	Alonso	52
11	Massa	51
12	Sainz	38
13	Grosjean	29
14	Kvyat	25
15	Button	21
16	Magnussen	7
17	Palmer	1
18	Wehrlein	1
19	Vandoorne	1
20	Gutierrez	0
21	Ericsson	0
22	Nasr	0
23	Haryanto	0
24	Ocon	0

## Constructors' championship

1	Mercedes	679
2	Red Bull	427
3	Ferrari	365
4	Force India	145
5	Williams	136
6	McLaren	74
7	Toro Rosso	55
8	Haas	29
9	Renault	8
10	Manor	1
11	Sauber	0

## Wins

Rosberg	9
Hamilton	8
Ricciardo	1
Verstappen	1

## Fastest laps

Rosberg	6
Ricciardo	4
Hamilton	3
Vettel	2
Alonso	1
Hulkenberg	1
Kvyat	1
Raikkonen	1

## Pole positions

Hamilton	10
Rosberg	8
Ricciardo	1

## Qualifying battle

ROS	9	10	HAM
VET	10	9	RAI
MAS	3	16	BOT
RIC	10	5	VES
RIC	4	0	KVY
PER	9	10	HUL
MAG	12	7	PAL
KVY	4	11	SAI
VES	3	1	SAI
ERI	12	7	NAS
ALO	13	5	BUT
BUT	0	1	VAN
OCO	2	5	WEH
HAR	5	7	WEH
GRO	11	8	GUT

## Free practice 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m20.914s
2	Vettel	1m20.993s
3	Raikkonen	1m21.072s
4	Perez	1m21.200s
5	Hulkenberg	1m21.409s
6	Bottas	1m21.447s
7	Rosberg	1m21.673s
8	Ricciardo	1m21.727s
9	Massa	1m21.836s
10	Kvyat	1m22.215s
11	Grosjean	1m22.500s
12	Sainz	1m22.563s
13	Ericsson	1m22.723s
14	Verstappen	1m22.877s
15	Gutierrez	1m22.910s
16	Alonso	1m23.089s
17	Nasr	1m23.089s
18	Button	1m23.342s
19	Magnussen	1m23.556s
20	Ocon	1m24.083s
21	Palmer	1m24.097s
22	Wehrlein	1m24.350s

WEATHER Cloudy; track 22C, air 14C

## Free practice 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m19.790s
2	Hamilton	1m19.794s
3	Rosberg	1m20.225s
4	Raikkonen	1m20.259s
5	Ricciardo	1m20.448s
6	Hulkenberg	1m20.574s
7	Verstappen	1m20.619s
8	Bottas	1m20.629s
9	Sainz	1m20.974s
10	Alonso	1m21.003s
11	Kvyat	1m21.193s
12	Button	1m21.198s
13	Massa	1m21.326s
14	Magnussen	1m21.442s
15	Perez	1m21.579s
16	Palmer	1m21.785s
17	Wehrlein	1m21.980s
18	Ericsson	1m21.997s
19	Nasr	1m22.037s
20	Grosjean	1m22.105s
21	Ocon	1m22.298s
22	Gutierrez	1m22.408s

WEATHER Cloudy; track 35C, air 17C

## Free practice 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m19.137s
2	Hamilton	1m19.231s
3	Ricciardo	1m19.370s
4	Rosberg	1m19.618s
5	Bottas	1m19.811s
6	Vettel	1m19.937s
7	Raikkonen	1m19.994s
8	Massa	1m19.997s
9	Hulkenberg	1m20.255s
10	Sainz	1m20.325s
11	Perez	1m20.472s
12	Kvyat	1m20.586s
13	Alonso	1m20.600s
14	Palmer	1m20.959s
15	Button	1m21.152s
16	Ericsson	1m21.245s
17	Gutierrez	1m21.338s
18	Magnussen	1m21.345s
19	Grosjean	1m21.601s
20	Wehrlein	1m21.758s
21	Ocon	1m21.921s
22	Nasr	1m22.354s

WEATHER Sunny; track 32C, air 14C

# Hamilton masters Mexico

He wasn't quite perfect. Then again, neither was anybody else last weekend

By Edd Straw, Editor-in-Chief

[@eddstrawF1](#)

## MERCEDES



**9 LEWIS HAMILTON**  
From the start of Friday practice, Hamilton had everything under control and it took a mighty effort from Rosberg to get to 0.254s from him in qualifying. He controlled the race beautifully, but a mistake on the brakes into the first corner means he misses out on a perfect 10 for an otherwise stellar weekend.

**7 NICO ROSBERG**  
This was a curate's egg of a weekend for Rosberg. He never looked as comfortable as his team-mate, and he only began to string things together in the second run in Q3. Never in Hamilton's league during the race, steering damage notwithstanding, he deserves credit for continuing to stand firm under pressure.

## FERRARI



**7 SEBASTIAN VETTEL**  
Vettel struggled to get the tyres working in qualifying, ending up just behind his team-mate. He lost time behind Massa before the Williams pitted, and drove a good attacking race after that. He was justifiably frustrated with Verstappen, but his defensive move against Ricciardo was foolish, given the recent edict.

**8 KIMI RAIKKONEN**  
Raikkonen outqualified Vettel by the tiniest of margins, and was running ahead of him in the race before making a second pitstop. The wear rates of the tyres allowed long stints on mediums for other cars, so the team would have been wise to leave him out to avoid taking Hulkenberg again. A decent weekend's work.

## WILLIAMS



**9 VALTTERI BOTTAS**  
Bottas looked to have the measure of the tricky grip levels available all weekend and comfortably had the edge over team-mate Massa. A scruffy first lap (with a brief off) aside, he drove an excellent race, passing Massa after the pitstops, and delivered the best result possible given Hulkenberg's pace.

**7 FELIPE MASSA**  
Massa qualified and finished directly behind his team-mate. But, while it was a solid weekend and he did well to keep the quicker Perez behind in the race, he was well off Bottas – down 0.481s in qualifying and 10.6s in the race. The race gap was mainly due to trying to get the mediums to work early on in his stint.

## RED BULL



**8 DANIEL RICCIARDO**  
Ricciardo wasn't happy with his qualifying lap, which was scruffy even allowing for the tyres not being fully switched on. His change to softs late on allowed him to battle for third and, while penalties for Verstappen and Vettel gave him a podium, his brilliant control when the Ferrari moved over on him deserved reward.

**7 MAX VERSTAPPEN**  
This was another mixed weekend for Verstappen. He just eclipsed Ricciardo in qualifying, survived a clash with Rosberg at the start, had a big moment when trying to pass the Mercedes and minor wing damage, then ran off track defending from Vettel. Not heeding advice to allow Vettel past cost him a podium.

## FORCE INDIA



**6 SERGIO PEREZ**  
Perez's mistake into Turn 1 in Q2 proved costly. Without that error, although not quite on Hulkenberg's level, he might have been ahead of the two Williams drivers and not spent so much time stuck behind Massa. He did overcommit when trying to pass the Williams, and had to ease off to manage brakes and tyres.

**9 NICO HULKENBERG**  
A mighty weekend from Hulkenberg, with the only blot being the spin while battling with Raikkonen. He can rightfully claim to have been on very old tyres, and argued the Finn turned across him, but risking a good finish was his one misjudgement of the weekend. Otherwise, he was fast and the better Force India driver.

## RENAULT



**6 KEVIN MAGNUSSEN**  
Magnussen did turn in a good lap to make it through to Q2, but the race was a long and fruitless one as he struggled on all three compounds of tyres and was unable to make much progress. But he did at least hold off Kvyat by the narrowest of margins (0.006s) in a 'virtual' race to the chequered flag.

**8 JOLYON PALMER**  
Damaging his monocoque was a cruel punishment for the smallest of errors in Saturday morning practice on the exit kerb at the last corner. Palmer made good progress in the race after a first-lap pitstop, showing resilience in battle against both McLaren drivers in a difficult-to-drive car.



## TORO ROSSO

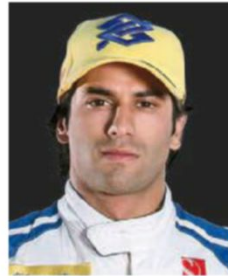


**6 DANIIL KVIAT**  
An electronics problem at the end of his first Q1 run condemned Kvyat to 18th on the grid, but his times suggested he wouldn't have matched Sainz had he made Q2. His race pace was good, but a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits cost him two places, and prevented him finishing ahead of Sainz.



**7 CARLOS SAINZ JR**  
Sainz looked very much at home on the low-grip circuit from Friday practice, and won a place in Q3 after a great Q2 lap. The race quickly got away from him though, and he was hit with a five-second penalty for a first-lap incident when he forced Alonso onto the grass. Will be disappointed to finish behind Nasr.

## SAUBER



**5 FELIPE NASR**  
This was another challenging weekend for Nasr, who struggled in qualifying but put in a tidy race, running very long on the medium-compound Pirellis he started on. He didn't quite have the pace of Ericsson, but he did have some minor front-wing damage in the race, so it was a solid performance overall.



**9 MARCUS ERICSSON**  
Ericsson described this race as the best of his 54-race F1 career, and he's probably right. A great effort in Q1, six tenths faster than Nasr, put him into Q2. A good result seemed impossible after he lost a nose when he was collected by Wehrlein on the first lap, but a long stint on mediums meant he finished a strong 11th.

## McLAREN



**7 JENSON BUTTON**  
Again, Button couldn't quite match his team-mate in qualifying but executed a strong race, finishing ahead of Alonso after opting for the standard one-stop strategy. Maybe he should have finished ahead of Ericsson, but strategic offset played a part in that. Given the pace of the car, a decent enough weekend's work.



**8 FERNANDO ALONSO**  
Alonso arguably deserves a top score just for his brilliant save when forced onto the grass by Sainz, which could have led to a big accident. His qualifying was good, and the race better than his result suggests, given time lost to a stuck wheelnut and turning the engine down in the closing laps to ensure it didn't fail.

## MANOR



**8 PASCAL WEHRLEIN**  
A mighty effort on his third and final run in the first stage of qualifying got Wehrlein into Q2. Given his pace, it would have been fascinating to see if he could have finished – as he suggested – as high as 11th, had he not been pitched out of the race at the second corner in an incident that was not of his making.



**6 ESTEBAN OCON**  
After progressing well in recent races, Ocon had problems with his car's balance in Mexico, finding it difficult to put together an error-free qualifying lap, and lagging half a second behind Wehrlein. He struggled in the race, but the data did show a mysterious imbalance on turn-in that Ocon said was to blame.

## HAAS

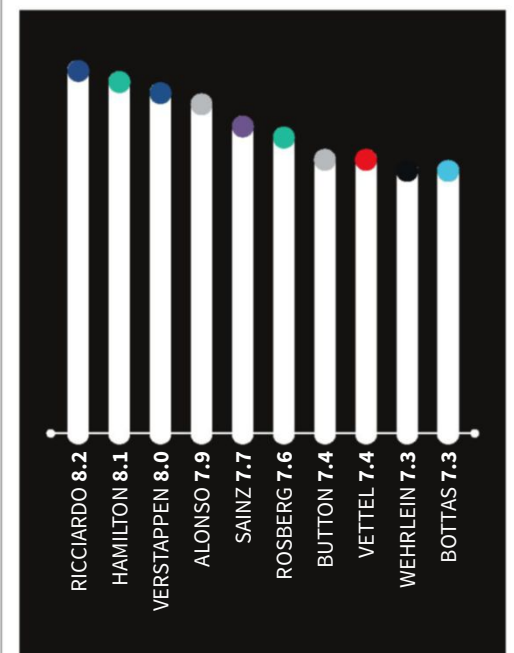


**5 ROMAIN GROSJEAN**  
This was another weekend when Grosjean was furious at problems with the car, the brakes proving difficult on Saturday and a general handling imbalance baffling him. Changing the floor to an older spec didn't help, so he had a trying race. It's hard to judge how much of the problem was car, and how much driver.



**6 ESTEBAN GUTIERREZ**  
Gutierrez had little chance of making an impression in what was the Haas team's worst weekend of the year. There were a few messy moments, such as the spin in Q1 as he overdrove attempting to improve his time, and leaving himself between a Sauber and a Manor at Turn 2 on the first lap, but these weren't costly.

## TOP 10 AVERAGE RATING





WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

## Audi Le Mans withdrawal

AUDI'S WITHDRAWAL FROM TOP-FLIGHT sports-prototype racing will leave a gaping hole that will be difficult to fill.

The decision to end its involvement in the World Endurance Championship – and with it participation at the Le Mans 24 Hours after an 18-year run – closes a unique chapter in sportscar racing. Audi isn't the most successful marque in the history of the French enduro, an honour held by sister brand Porsche, but the rate at which it notched up its successes was far shorter and nothing short of phenomenal.

Audi's roll of honour in the 18 seasons of its sportscar programme, which included three years in 2003-05 when there were no true factory cars, includes 13 Le Mans victories, 11 at the Sebring 12 Hours and nine at the Petit Le Mans enduro at Road Atlanta. Championship successes include nine American Le Mans Series drivers' titles, two in the European Le Mans Series (including one when it was called the LMES) and two more in the WEC.

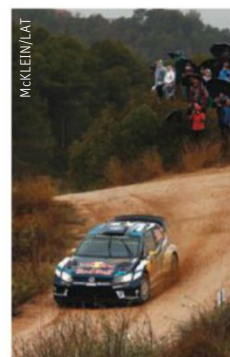
The problem for the WEC and Le Mans now is twofold. It needs to attract a new manufacturer to join Porsche and Toyota in LMP1. But just as importantly it needs to ensure that there are

privateers on the grid in P1 to make up for the shortfall following Audi's withdrawal and Rebellion Racing's less cataclysmic but still very significant decision to step down to LMP2.

The Automobile Club de l'Ouest, promoter of the WEC and organiser of the 24 Hours at Le Mans, insists that there are manufacturers interested in joining the P1 party. There are none, however, on the imminent horizon. That's significant with a new rules cycle due to start in 2018, which would be an obvious entry point for any newcomer.

The ACO and the FIA, which jointly frame the rules for the WEC, are trying to encourage car makers by expanding the technological remit of the P1 rulebook. They announced plans to incorporate hydrogen fuel cells in the regulations in the future and that the top prototype class will be open to any biofuel from 2018.

At the same time there is a continued drive to reduce costs, but ultimately the rulemakers are only nibbling at the edges of the nine-figure budgets required. The ever-increasing technological scope of the class, which will allow cars a third hybrid system from 2018, is making LMP1 ever more expensive.



WRC

## ...AND VW CANS ITS RALLYING EFFORT

THE VOLKSWAGEN Group's culling of its motorsport programme continued earlier this week with the news just before we closed for press that Volkswagen's World Rally Championship commitment will end after Rally Australia this month.

As soon as the news of Audi's departure from the WEC arrived, speculation turned on Volkswagen Motorsport. A Tuesday morning board meeting in Wolfsburg confirmed there would be no WRC participation beyond the end of this season.

The meeting also concluded that there would be no opportunity for the new car to be run in private hands. Volkswagen Motorsport staff are expected to remain in employment, with some of the focus moving to the firm's customer-based Golf TCR.

The move leaves world champion Sebastien Ogier, Jari-Matti Latvala and Andreas Mikkelsen on the market.

M-Sport and Toyota have yet to confirm their line-ups for next season, and it's understood seats could become available at Citroen. Hyundai, Autosport understands, has its three drivers under a firm contract to contest all rallies next year.

The Volkswagen Group retains a WRC programme with Skoda's Fabia R5. Some of the Hannover expertise could be sent in the Czechs' direction.

DAVID EVANS

# leaves LMP1 in crisis

Those very rules that have made LMP1 so relevant to the manufacturers have increased the gap between the factory cars and the non-hybrid privateers. That played a part in the decision of top independent Rebellion to step down to P2, perhaps only temporarily, ahead of a season in which it feared a new and faster breed of LMP2 would be snapping at its heels.

Rebellion's departure leaves only one P1 privateer in the German-based ByKolles squad, which is planning to return to the WEC next year with a solo entry. That's a problem at a time when there are only four factory cars in the series and most likely no more at Le Mans, presuming Toyota again decides against fielding a third entry.

It should not be forgotten that the WEC was reborn with two makes in 2012 after Peugeot's late withdrawal. Toyota stepped up in what had been intended as a development season and fielded at least one car from Le Mans onwards.

The difference four years on is that the

privateer contingent has shrunk to the extent that it has almost disappeared. Back in 2012 there were five regular independent entries and seven at Le Mans in a year in which Audi's giant four-car assault brought the P1 entry to 13 cars.

The WEC may be able to get away with five P1 cars at the front of a 30-car field in the regular six-hour races. But the problem becomes critical at Le Mans. Five or maybe six cars at the sharp

end of a 24-hour race that will have a higher rate of attrition is not acceptable.

ACO sporting director Vincent Beaumesnil has said that boosting the privateer field is his "top priority". But it is difficult to see what

more the rulemakers could have done beyond the two-stage package of performance breaks announced for 2017-18 in the summer.

He insists that the new rules, even before the projected arrival of DRS in 2018, will make a privateer car potentially very competitive. The problem was that the changes were announced too late to tempt anyone new for 2017.

GARY WATKINS

**"Five or six cars in a 24-hour race is not acceptable"**

WEC

## ORECA 07 GETS ITS SHAKEDOWN WITH LAPIERRE

FRENCH CONSTRUCTOR ORECA has unveiled its 2017 LMP2 contender after a successful first shakedown of the car.

The new ORECA 07, powered by the one-make Gibson V8 engine, undertook its first runs at the Paul Ricard circuit on Wednesday and Thursday of last week with Nicolas Lapierre at the wheel.

The car is based on the monocoque of the organisation's existing 05 P2 car but, according to ORECA technical director David Flourey, incorporates "radically different aero as well as significantly increased efficiency and downforce".

ORECA has revealed that the car is significantly below the 930kg minimum weight for the new P2 class and therefore carries substantial ballast.

Flourey described the shakedown as successful and said no problems had been encountered.

"It's phase one of the programme, but an important and really positive one,"

he said. "The level of performance reached during these test days is exactly the one we hoped during simulation, so the car's potential is extremely interesting."

Former Toyota LMP1 factory driver Lapierre, who is leading the World Endurance Championship P2 points with the Signatech Alpine squad, claimed that the new car "represents a significant step forward from the ORECA 05".

"We've just kept running without any trouble and that was a really good working session," he added.

ORECA is the third of the four constructors licensed to build cars to next year's new P2 rulebook to get its new car on track, after Dallara and Onroak Automotive with the latest Ligier. The Riley/Multimatic is expected to run for the first time this month.

Owners of ORECA 05s will be able to build up their cars into 2007-spec around their existing monocoques.

**GARY WATKINS**



## Who joins Haas for 2017?

Gutierrez is 'on hold', Magnussen is a free agent, and Ocon can't be ruled out, says team boss Steiner

HERE WAS A LOT OF CONFIDENCE BEING EXUDED in the paddock at last weekend's Mexican Grand Prix from a number of drivers when it came to their futures.

But as with any game of musical chairs, it appears that someone somewhere is going to be left standing, looking in on Formula 1 from the outside.

Esteban Gutierrez is one of those who is convinced that he will be in F1 next season, even though Haas is taking its time over a decision as to who will partner Romain Grosjean in 2017. There is no doubt that Gutierrez is on a shortlist team principal Gunther Steiner claims is "down to two or three, not 10 anymore".

One other high-profile name on that list is that of Kevin Magnussen, who was on the radar of Haas a year ago and is again firmly in its sights now Renault's option to re-sign him has expired, allowing him free rein to explore options. Steiner has confirmed holding talks with Magnussen, just as Haas "have talked with a few other drivers... with Esteban [Ocon] also still in the mix".

Clearly recognising Magnussen as a driver worth having, Steiner added: "It was no secret we spoke with him last year at Monza, and we have always kept in touch. He's a driver who has a place in F1."

Steiner made abundantly clear, however, that no deal of any kind has been offered to Magnussen, or any other driver, as the team is prepared to bide its time before completing its line-up, with Romain Grosjean expected to stay on in the leading seat.

It's the same story at Renault, with team principal Fred Vasseur mulling over who will partner Nico Hulkenberg next season. "We postponed a decision mainly because all the guys now on the radar are rookies or quite young," said Vasseur, with Magnussen, team-mate Jolyon Palmer and Manor driver Ocon in the mix.

"To be honest I'm getting more and more information, more and more data, race after each race. It's my job to consider everything. All the drivers are doing a good job, both my guys and others, and it's quite tough to decide. But I've gained more info over the weekend, and I don't want to say it's uncomfortable for me, but that's life.

"It's tough, and I know I will have to take a decision, but it's a decision that will be a real commitment from Renault for the future."

While Steiner might have sounded out Magnussen, the Dane is quite unequivocal as to where he wants to be. "I want to stay here, that's my target and what I want to do," said Magnussen.

"It's a factory team that has the ability to fight for championships in the future, and that's what I want to be a part of."

**IAN PARKES**

The sun is setting on  
Mortara with Audi



DTM

DTM

## Mortara to Mercedes

MERCEDES HAS SIGNED TOP AUDI STAR Edoardo Mortara for the 2017 DTM season.

Mortara narrowly missed out on the title for Audi this year, finishing four points adrift of BMW's champion Marco Wittmann.

The Italian's deal to switch to Mercedes was signed long before the end of the season.

"We are delighted to finally announce Edo as one of the team's race drivers for 2017," said Mercedes DTM boss Ulrich Fritz.

"Edo and Mercedes came to an agreement some time ago, but due to respect to Audi we didn't announce the signing of their title contender earlier.

"He is the perfect fit for our team – he is not only an experienced race driver but also a great character. We're looking forward to a successful partnership with him."

His Audi farewell will come in this month's FIA GT World Cup in Macau, where he will drive a WRT-run R8 LMS.

Meanwhile, as previously reported in Autosport, the DTM will drop to 18 cars in 2017, with acknowledgement coming from Mercedes and Audi. Mercedes will drop its two-car teams from Mücke Motorsport and ART Grand Prix, moving all six of its machines under the umbrella of HWA.



**FORMULA 1** Formula Renault ace Will Palmer got his F1 test with McLaren at Silverstone last week, his prize for winning the 2015 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award. Palmer drove the car in which Jenson Button won the 2011 Canadian GP. "It was absolutely incredible, like nothing I've ever done before," he said. "A McLaren at Silverstone is an amazing combination. It will be a massive memory for the rest of my life." **Photograph by Mauger/LAT**

## IN THE HEADLINES



DUNBAR/LAT

### WILLIAMS MAKING 'STEADY' RECOVERY

Sir Frank Williams is making a "slow and steady" recovery from pneumonia in hospital, says Williams F1 CEO Mike O'Driscoll. Deputy team principal Claire Williams has been absent from recent grands prix to be close to her 74-year-old father, but the team hopes she will return for the season-closing Abu Dhabi GP.

### RAST BABY GIVES STEVENS JOTA SHOT

Ex-Formula 1 driver Will Stevens is remaining with the G-Drive LMP2 squad for this weekend's Shanghai World Endurance Championship round. The Briton, who helped the Jota-run team to its first class victory at Fuji, will again drive the team's ORECA-Nissan 05 alongside Alex Brundle and Roman Rusinov in place of Rene Rast, who is absent because his partner is expecting their first child. Alex Lynn has switched cars at the Manor ORECA squad for this weekend and will drive with Richard Bradley and Matt Rao after a reshuffle in the team's line-up.

### STRAKKA CUTS SHORT WEC SEASON

The Strakka Racing LMP2 squad has called time on its 2016 WEC campaign. Engine problems at last month's Fuji round turned out to be terminal and customs restrictions meant the team was unable to get another Nissan V8 into China for Shanghai. It opted to withdraw from Bahrain because its Gibson 015S would have had to have taken a three-minute stop/go penalty because the team has exceeded its engine allocation for the season.

### MAINI BACK TO F3 FOR MACAU GP

Indian Arjun Maini will return from GP3 to Formula 3 for the Macau Grand Prix. Maini, who started the season in F3 with T-Sport, replaces Red Bull Junior Niko Kari in Motopark's line-up for the showcase F3 event. German Keyvan Andres Soori has also joined the Macau entry list with Mücke Motorsport, after competing this season in the Euroformula Open series.

### ONROAK TAKES OVER CRAWFORD

Ligier constructor Onroak Automotive has acquired the company that builds the US Formula 4 chassis. The Crawford Motorsport division, which formerly built Daytona Prototype chassis, has been incorporated into Onroak and its North Carolina workshops will become the service base for Ligier's LMP2, P3 and Group CN cars in North America.

### TRIPLE 8 WITHDRAWS BTCC APPEAL

British Touring Car Championship team Triple Eight Racing has withdrawn its appeal against the exclusion of Josh Cook's MG6 from what would have been a race win at Silverstone in September. The team has accepted that Cook's rear wing was outside permitted tolerances, but added that it did not seek to gain an advantage. The decision confirms Tom Ingram's race win.



WRC

## EVANS CLOSES ON DMACK DEAL

ELFYN EVANS'S return to full-time World Rally Championship employment looks increasingly likely to be confirmed with a DMACK Ford Fiesta RS WRC drive next year.

The Welshman spent two years driving a factory Fiesta, until he was dropped by M-Sport at the end of last season. But Estonian Ott Tanak's elevation from the DMACK squad to drive alongside Eric Camilli in the main M-Sport World Rally Team has left a seat open for Evans in 2017.

The understanding is that Evans will drive a third 2017-spec Ford Fiesta RS WRC on all rounds next season, with the car being registered as a potential points-scorer for M-Sport.

"That's what we're working on," Wilson told Autosport. "The target is for him to do the full championship,

but we've still got some way to go."

Evans won this year's British Rally Championship with the DMACK squad and Dick Cormack, the boss of the Cumbrian-based tyre firm, has made clear his hopes of keeping the 27-year-old for WRC next season. "We've always talked about that," he said. "Ideally we wanted a two-car team, but that could be tough with car availability. But Elfyn in a DMACK car would make a lot of sense."

In addition to this year's BRC, Evans tackled WRC2 with M-Sport and used a Fiesta R5 to win the class on three rounds this year.

Evans completed the recce (pictured) for last week's Rally GB with former co-driver Dan Barritt, prompting rumours that the pair will join forces again next season.

DAVID EVANS

BRITISH TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

# BTCC tweak could negate Subaru plus

THE BRITISH TOURING CAR Championship regulations will be tweaked next season, and the alteration could remove one of the key strengths of the Team BMR Subaru Levorg machines.

The change means that all machines will be examined to make sure that the centre of gravity of each model does not give it a substantial advantage over other competitors in the category.

The move is designed to level the playing field between different configurations of car.

Team BMR built four of the estate-shaped Levorg machines for the BTCC this season. The factory-backed cars were driven by former champions Colin Turkington and Jason Plato, together with James Cole and BMR team principal Warren Scott.

The two-litre turbocharged cars have a flat-four boxer-configuration engine, which means that the weight in the powerplant is carried lower down in the chassis compared to cars fitted with the usual in-line four-cylinder motors. The advantageous engine configuration was one of the reasons why Team BMR opted to build the Japanese car.

The machine had a difficult introduction, with fuel-rail problems at the start of the season and an issue with the inlet manifold, which would not let the motor breathe properly. Once the manifold was upgraded due to a technical dispensation from the series bosses, starting from Oulton Park in June, the cars were often the pacesetters.

The weight distribution was one of the key elements that made it the strongest package on the grid towards the end of 2016. But now it seems likely that this advantage will be removed.

Turkington won five races in the

Levorg and finished in fourth place in the standings, while the sister car of Plato won at Knockhill in August and was seventh in the points.

At a recent team managers' meeting, representatives of the other teams on the grid voted in favour of series bosses coming up with a formula to level out the centre of gravity.

Team principal Scott said he was disappointed by the decision, but recognised that this had been done at the behest of rival squads. "This is a shame, but it's how the championship works, and we signed up to the BTCC and its regulations," he said. "There was a perception that we had an advantage with the weight distribution of the car, but I'm not sure that's true. I would argue that our speed towards the end of the 2016 campaign came because we were going into each of the race meetings without too much success ballast. We have to accept this and move on."

Team BMR can now build Subaru Levorgs for privateers. Scott added: "We have looked into building more cars, and if there is a desire for them we could."

Sources in the paddock also suggest that Team BMR could operate two teams next season. One would be the factory-backed squad, and it could also field an independent team with two cars.

● Laser Tools Racing driver Aiden Moffat tested for Team BMR at Donington Park last week as he evaluates options ahead of his 2017 campaign. The 20-year-old has also lined up some running in GT3 and GT4 sports cars before determining his direction. "He adapted to rear-wheel drive really well," said Scott. "We were all impressed." Cole and Scott also conducted mileage.

MATT JAMES



EBREY/LAT



MICKLEIN/LAT





**LE MANS 24 HOURS** United Autosports will make its entry to the LMP2 class of the European Le Mans Series in 2017 with a new Ligier JSP217 with which it will also contest the Le Mans 24 Hours, for which the British-based team has gained an entry for winning this year's ELMS LMP3 title. The team, which is the UK agent for Ligier constructor Onroak's LMP3 and CN cars, will also continue in LMP3, for which it has already confirmed Sean Rayhall, Enzo Potolicchio and John Falb in one car for next year's ELMS. Team co-owner Zak Brown said: "We see it as great potential for the team and so we are working on getting a programme together and will be testing drivers in the coming weeks and months."

#### INDYCAR SERIES

# Montoya plumps for Indy-only deal

JUAN PABLO MONTOYA HAS accepted Team Penske's offer of an Indianapolis 500-only deal for 2017 and will not race in IndyCar full time.

Penske dropped Montoya from its primary line-up in favour of Josef Newgarden after a disappointing 2016, but kept the door open for Indy.

Team president Tim Cindric said Montoya had now agreed to stay on board for the one-off outing. "I'm pleasantly surprised that he took the Indy-only offer," Cindric told Autosport.

"We were really honest with each other about what our different goals were and for a period it didn't align, but I think this is a good situation for both of us."

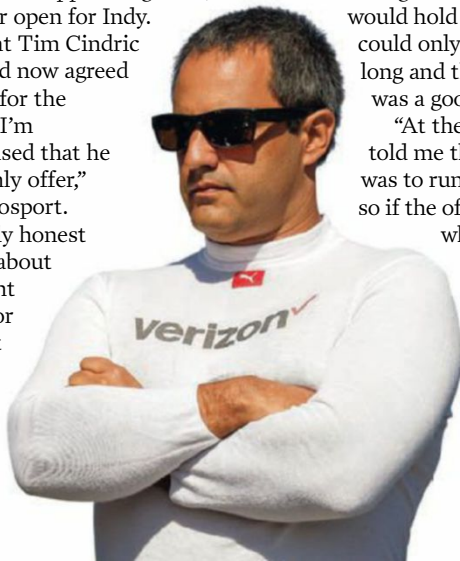
"He wanted to run a full season with someone and especially with the way this season ended he wanted to give it another shot if possible. He didn't want to leave the team but wanted to see what else was out there."

"We agreed that was fine – we would hold a spot for him but we could only hold a spot for so long and the end of October was a good timeframe."

"At the end of last week he told me the best opportunity was to run Indy with Penske, so if the offer still stood that is what he wanted to do."

Montoya is also favoured for Penske if it enters the IMSA Sportscar series, although this is unlikely before 2018.

**BRUCE MARTIN**



COBB/LAT



#### FORMULA V8 3.5

## AITKEN STARS BUT CAR FALLS FOUL

GP3 RACE WINNER JACK AITKEN MADE A STRONG IMPACT ON his Formula V8 3.5 debut last weekend at Jerez. The Briton qualified on pole for race one, before a dispute over his car's bodywork gave threat of exclusion.

An exhaust-shaped partial curve cut into the left sidepod of the RP Motorsport car, just before the rear wheel, was the source of contention. RP appealed Aitken's subsequent exclusion from qualifying, and with the decision suspended he was allowed to start from the front of the field.

FV8 3.5 sporting manager Jordi Castells said: "We can certainly say it isn't a modification that will bring a second a lap, but it looks like it doesn't conform. The team have said the sidepod was like that since they acquired the cars from ISR."

The appeal process became slightly less relevant when Aitken's anti-stall activated at the start. But the 2015 Formula Renault Eurocup champion – who will also contest this weekend's Barcelona finale – claimed a solid fourth in race two.

**PETER MILLS**

# FEEDBACK

## Bring back common sense to F1 penalties

Just when I thought things couldn't get any worse with this latest driver-penalties debacle and the farcical 'which three are on the podium?' palaver... First we had Verstappen in third place, then we see him being taken away to be replaced by a hurried Vettel, only to find out he was later replaced after the podium celebrations by Ricciardo.

The majority of the capacity crowd in Mexico wanted to see a competitive race, with the correct three drivers on the podium at the end of it. Drivers who are not just there because they didn't race each other, defend their position, or speak out for fear of being penalised!

I'm old enough to remember the great times of F1, including the Villeneuve/Arnoux battle at Dijon, which would never have happened if all these penalties had been in place then. So come on guys, let's have some common sense, and make up your minds before you send the drivers out on the podium!

**Colin O'Callaghan**  
Runcorn

### Vettel's the villain...

Vettel has crossed the line. He should take a penalty for what he said over the radio in Mexico. The result should

be as the cars finished. Start him from the back in Brazil!

**Richard Hargrave**  
Hitchin

### ...no, it's Verstappen

Verstappen – not big, not clever, he's going to hurt someone. Forza Vettel!

**Bob McEwan**  
Rochford, Essex

### Jaguar needs to be at Le Mans

Sadly a chunk of my last letter got lost in transmission, otherwise Micky Burchett (October 20) would have seen that I had not missed the point regarding Jaguar and Formula E.

Jaguar may well feel the need to develop electric cars for the future, but they need a future! To do this they need to make serious inroads, now, back into what years ago was their sector of the marketplace, usurped by BMW and Audi. I accept that my view of Formula E is somewhat negative, but is it really likely to grab the attention of the type of customer Jaguar needs?

Where Jaguar needs to be is at Le Mans. It's their home, it's where people expect them to be and it's where they will grab the headlines.



Wales Rally GB: a bobble-hat-and-parka experience to be relished

They can develop hybrid systems, which I guess would be far more relevant now to Jaguar's future. With Audi pulling out and BMW coming in, isn't now the time for Jaguar to be there? At least with the F-type, if not a prototype.

**Rod Hunt**  
By email

### UK rallying's finest showcase

With 164 competitors from 23 nations, the longest competitive route in recent history, a return to Chester after 20 years and a new RallyFest stage at Cholmondeley Castle that drew 10,000 fans, the 2016 Dayinsure Wales Rally GB could not have been a better showcase for UK rallying.

The continued backing of the Welsh government remains invaluable, alongside the support of our 2016 title partner and our other partners and suppliers; their involvement has made a huge contribution to the progress the event has made in recent years.

Crucially, the rally would not have been possible without the support of almost 2000 volunteer marshals and officials. Whether contributing to the safety, logistics, promotion or the smooth running of the event, their efforts are sincerely appreciated by everyone at the MSA and IMS, not to mention the wider rallying community of competitors, teams and fans.

We hope that the rally was as special for you as it was for us and we look forward to seeing you all again next year.

**Ben Taylor, Managing Director,**  
**International Motor Sports**  
**Rob Jones, Chief Executive,**  
**Motor Sports Association**

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# Character building

Lewis Hamilton's self-reliance can make him prone to inner struggles. He just has to harness that core mental strength to be unstoppable

By Ian Parkes, Chief F1 Correspondent

[@ianparkesf1](#)

**THERE IS A CASE TO MAKE THAT LEWIS HAMILTON** put himself on the back foot in his bid for a fourth Formula 1 title before the 2016 season even started.

That's not to say from his current back-to-the-wall position that he can't go on and eclipse his hero Ayrton Senna – and equal the haul of Alain Prost and Sebastian Vettel – in securing championship number four. He has both the talent and the car. But the concern is whether Hamilton has the mental capacity this year to again overhaul Mercedes team-mate Nico Rosberg, as he did in the middle part of the campaign when he produced a blitzkrieg run of six wins in seven races.

When Hamilton clinched his third title a year ago with victory in the United States Grand Prix, and with three races remaining, he effectively accomplished all he had set out to do in F1 by matching Senna.

During the winter break the reset button would have been hit, but before this season began an event took place within the team that has since proved significant, and provides an insight into Hamilton's mindset.

Mercedes opted to break up the team of mechanics that had been a key part of his title triumphs in the previous two years, switching five of his crew – including his number-one mechanic – to

Rosberg's side of the garage, and vice versa.

After bemoaning their departure early in the season, Hamilton then outlined their importance heading into last month's Malaysian Grand Prix, after Rosberg had reeled off three successive wins post-summer break.

"Mechanics don't have an effect on set-up," he said. "The biggest effect it can have is really on the driver psychologically, but that is not something I want to go into."

Pressed on the exact nature of the psychological effects, Hamilton added: "Just all-round psychologically. If something changes, when it doesn't really need to be changed, it can have all sorts of effects."

This gives a hint at the 31-year-old's mental state coming into the season. Throw in the bad starts from pole position in the opening two grands prix in Australia and Bahrain, both won by Rosberg, and then the engine issues in qualifying at the following two races in China and Russia, and it would be no surprise if Hamilton felt psychologically at a low ebb.

He has always worn his heart on his sleeve and never found cause to seek help from a sports psychologist, saying in 2014

that he has "never had it, never needed it and never will have it". Yet there have been many occasions since he entered F1 in 2007 when we have seen Hamilton struggle with what can only be described as his inner demons.

Hamilton is a tremendous self-motivator, but there have been times when he's appeared emotionally lost and vulnerable, to such an extent that you wondered whether he might throw in the towel. His incident-strewn 2011 season, during which his then McLaren team-mate Jenson Button comfortably beat him in the points, is perhaps the most obvious example.

We witnessed that negative side in Japan a few weeks ago, initially with his child-like Snapchat posts during a press conference, then his bizarre walkout from a post-qualifying media session. He even went so far as to block from his Twitter account a number of journalists he felt particularly offended by.

In those moments, where were Hamilton's focus, drive and commitment? Not for the first time he allowed outside influences to affect his thinking, and ultimately his form, at a time when he needed to be concentrating solely on

catching Rosberg.

Perhaps the engine blow-up in Malaysia, where he was on course for a win, was the final straw, contributing to his amusing, yet bemusing, behaviour in Japan.

There are times when everyone, no matter how

mentally strong they think they are, needs a psychological helping hand. In Hamilton's case, I'm not talking about him listening to the platitudes from his followers on Twitter and Facebook telling him how wonderful he is, how he doesn't need the media, and that Mercedes is against him this year. Nor should he listen to the A-list, B-list and C-list friends that he's accrued in recent times, who only see the partying star he's become, not one of F1's great drivers. And nor am I suggesting he enlists professional help. If it's not for him, then there is no need to head down that route.

Instead, Hamilton needs to get back to his roots, dig deep within himself and push to one side the outside influences. It's something he seems to find easier when he's behind in the points – he fought back brilliantly earlier in 2016, only to lose his way again once he got his nose ahead.

Now the destiny of the title is not entirely in his own hands, and in the United States and Mexico there was evidence that he had stopped being distracted and rediscovered the strength of character that has made him a three-time F1 world champion.

He can only hope it has not all come too late. ✨

**“Mercedes broke up the team of mechanics behind his triumphs”**

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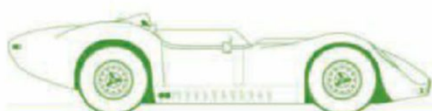
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# Ringling hollow

Audi's decision to quit the WEC came as a shock, but it was the wording of the announcement that rankled

By Gary Watkins, Special Contributor

[@gazzasportscars](#)

**AUDI DID THE WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP** a disservice when it dropped its bombshell last week. Not because a marque that has been the mainstay of LMP1 for 18 years was withdrawing from the pinnacle of endurance racing – though that was a blow to us all – but because of the wording of its official statement.

The use of the word “instead” when talking about LMP1 and its Formula E entry was entirely disingenuous. We all know that Audi announced it was ramping up its involvement in the Abt Schaeffler FE squad at the start of September.

More to the point, Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich pointed out shortly afterwards that the FE campaign was on an entirely different level – there's probably an extra nought involved in a P1 budget – and would have no bearing on any decisions about the future of the sportscar programme.

Yet a few weeks later, here was Audi headlining a press release ‘Formula E instead of WEC’ in clear contradiction of Ullrich's statements that it was an “additional programme”. There was then a quote from Audi chairman Rupert Stadler about a decision to “contest the race for the future on electric power”.

The tone of the release, which came across as an attempt to put a positive spin on bad news, gave the impression that Audi believes FE is more, to borrow words oft used by Ullrich, “future-orientated” than the WEC.

That clearly got the goat of the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, both the promoter of the WEC and the organiser of its centrepiece at Le Mans. ACO president Pierre Fillon said that electric motors were “already part of our daily lives in endurance racing” and pointed out that, together with the FIA, the organisation is working on how to incorporate hydrogen fuel cells into its regulations.

We all know that electrification – the buzzword in the automotive industry right now – is an important trend for the world's car makers. That explains why Audi got into FE on the ground floor by lending its name to Abt in season one in 2014-15 and then its technology in season two. And why it is now backing the German team with a view to a full factory programme in the future. But it doesn't explain why it is pulling out of the WEC.

Audi's statement does hint at the bigger picture behind the WEC withdrawal. It pointed out that the decision needed to be understood “in the context of the current burdens of the brand”. That's a clear reference to the financial liabilities

likely to follow last year's ‘dieselgate’ emissions row.

The Volkswagen Group, of which Audi is a part, clearly needs to save money, and had already been trimming its motorsport budget even before this latest decision. Audi and sister marque Porsche cutting their entries for the Le Mans 24 Hours from three to two cars for this year was part of that belt-tightening.

When the group cleared Porsche to go head to head with Audi at Le Mans and in the WEC, it was clear that the two brands had to go to the startline using different technologies. The decline of the turbodiesel market and political pressure in some countries against diesels threatened to remove the raison d'être of Audi's LMP1 programme and made it an easy target.

Ullrich had a good counter-argument when I spoke to him at the Fuji WEC round earlier this month. “We are talking about an efficient combustion engine [in the turbodiesel],” he said, “and efficiency is going to be a really important issue if there are going to be political decisions around the world.”

Ullrich's arguments, for once, must have fallen on deaf ears in the Audi boardroom. He has been the master of keeping Audi's P1 programme going all these years. That has to be one of the greatest achievements of his 20-plus years at the helm of Audi Sport.

We don't know why it was decided to end Audi's involvement in prototypes straight away when much of next year's budget has already been spent. Ullrich said in Fuji that the 2017 car, based on the monocoque of this year's R18 e-tron quattro, was “almost ready”, but I guess there's no stopping the falling axe marked ‘budget cuts’.

Audi has trumpeted a technological message since 2001, when it pioneered direct-injection in the racing environment. Turbodiesels and hybrids followed. My hope is that one day it finds a new calling card that will enable it to return to sportscars, and it might just be the hydrogen fuel cell.

The Ingolstadt marque is the brand chosen to spearhead that technology within VW, and Ullrich has revealed that an investigation is under way within Audi Sport into this technology. There are, however, a lot of unknowns about racing a hydrogen fuel cell: when it might be eligible, if it really is viable, and now much would it cost?

I've got my fingers crossed that Audi will return to showcase a new road-relevant technology at Le Mans sooner rather than later. I just hope its absence from the top ranks will be shorter than the 15 seasons that Porsche was out of the game. ❄

**“Fingers crossed Audi will return to showcase new tech at Le Mans”**



# Ogier nails it on the gravel

The Frenchman finally took his first gravel victory of the season in the mixed conditions in Wales

By David Evans, Rallies Editor

🐦 @daviddevansrally



Ogier enjoyed Rally GB this time around



**L**ast year, a subdued and visibly emotional Sebastien Ogier left the winner's bottle of champagne untouched. Shocking events in Paris a day earlier

quelled the mood for celebration. The Frenchman promised British fans he'd be back with a smile next time around.

Last Sunday afternoon, he couldn't and wouldn't stop smiling. He and co-driver Julien Ingrassia drained the champagne off the back of another superb performance.

Ogier's summer of discontent, largely thanks to running-order regulations, must seem a very long time ago now. In the past five weeks he's taken his first Corsican win, his fourth world title, and now his first win of the year on gravel. Some would say Ogier's returned to his purple patch; others would propose he's never left it. One error in Finland aside, he's been pretty peerless all year.

#### **Four and four again**

Ogier's not really a man for numbers. He got the number four – that one came last time out in Spain. But the fact that he's never won any rally four times on the bounce? He wasn't sure.



Tanak kept the pressure on Ogier to the end



“I don’t know,” he said ahead of the event. “If you tell me this, I believe you. I don’t really know the numbers...”

Rally GB or RAC Rally hat-tricks are nothing new. They’ve been happening since Erik Carlsson in the 1960s and Timo Makinen in the ’70s. But four? Not so common. Petter Solberg is the only one.

Joining ‘Hollywood’ would be nice, but Ogier was driven by a more fundamental desire last week. He was driven by frustration; the frustration at not winning so far this season on gravel thanks to sweeping the road on the first two days of events.

Rally Australia’s shift to become the final round of the season in a little over a fortnight means the New South Wales roads will be drier and less favourable than ever to a man at the front of the field.

“I think,” Ogier said, “this could be my last chance to win on gravel this season. And I want to do this – it’s my favourite surface.”

At the end of the first stage, Ogier looked less sure. He’d slipped and slithered his way through the opening 19 miles of competition in Myherin. “I don’t know,” he said. “I couldn’t find the confidence. The visibility was bad, we had the fog and the wipers kept stopping. Every minute or so, they were sticking.”

He was fastest.



Tanak was being touted as the likeliest challenger to Ogier before the rally

Feet found, he didn’t miss a beat. His Volkswagen, however, wasn’t quite so compliant. A noisy driveshaft at the rear of the Polo remained in the back of Ogier’s mind for the afternoon, but only came to the forefront in the final few competitive metres of Friday, when the car started diving to the left under braking.

“I think we were quite lucky,” said the Frenchman.

Nonsense. Ogier’s car held together longer than his team-mates’ because he drives it softer, straighter, cooler, calmer.

Much as the first run through Myherin might have unnerved him,

the second shot cemented his confidence.

The fog was worse second time around. A real pea-souper, the sort found on the moorland-style road on top of Myherin, is a great leveller – it can turn ace average and strip a world champion back to a mere mortal. Not this one.

“I really committed in the fog,” said Ogier. “I was much happier on the second time. I knew the notes worked, so I really drove to them and trusted them. It’s not nice in these conditions, but I was very happy with that time. The confidence was really there.”

Ogier’s pace was relentless and, frustratingly for his rivals, apparently free from the biggest of risks once he was away and in the clear.

Sensing that there would be talk of his favourable position on the road, Ogier defused it immediately, by fronting up to it.

“I know I have the advantage where I am,” he said. “I know I’m in the best position and I have to make the most of it. I have to use this advantage because on Sunday we’re all in the same place [on the road].”

That he did. Going into the final day with 33 seconds in hand, Ogier was able to slacken the commitment slightly, but he insisted that Ott Tanak’s exceptional pace meant the final day was going to be no Sunday drive. >>



### DMACK's dry dream

When Tanak arrived in Ruthin for service after a couple of runs at shakedown, the dream was coming true. He stepped out of the all-white DMACK Ford Fiesta RS WRC and smiled. Then grinned.

Something was missing. "No mud..." said the Estonian. The car was spotless, the dream was real.

BBC Breakfast's ever-cheerful weather-watcher was in on it as well, talking of highs of 19 degrees in places just a stone's throw from Clocaenog. Yes, there might have been the odd cloud on the horizon, but it wasn't expected to deliver anything. And

sunshine? There'd be enough.

Friday was a big day for Tanak but, with new boots waiting in Newtown at lunchtime, the most important thing on day one was the weather staying dry for the weekend.

Saturday was key. Eight dry stages and a shade over 60 competitive miles would be, so the theory went, just beyond Michelin's soft cover used by most of the other frontrunners (it's quite possible that tyre-saver extraordinaire Ogier might have had something to say about that...).

DMACK's soft would have been even worse. But the hard compound? Well, that was a different matter. The shift in

Tanak's challenge was boosted by DMACKs, although he suffered a puncture

production base from China to the UK has given DMACK the ability to test and tune tyres far quicker, and the hard variant of the DMG+2 GS61 was primed and ready for Saturday. Marginally harder than Michelin's soft, this one had been cooked specifically for these conditions.

The reintroduction of Pantperthog was a further shot in the arm for DMACK's plans – the slate-based five-miler just north of Machynlleth was about as abrasive the roads come in this part of the world.

Across the board, everybody was talking Tanak whitewash in mid-Wales. "Ott's the dark horse, he's the one to watch on those tyres..." warned Kris Meeke in Ruthin town centre car park on Thursday morning.

Such sentiment was echoed everywhere, right up until the point where the rain started.

All was not lost – the softer DMACK would still offer some advantage in damp conditions, and Tanak charged hard. Fastest in Hafren and Dyfnant first time, he clung to Ogier's coat-tails, just 7.7s behind the Frenchman. Four stages in, the best of the rest were already more than half a minute off the front.

A problem with the left-rear of the Fiesta was cause for concern in Newtown, but Tanak promised he was more than capable of dealing with a bit of squirming and darting around under braking. What



Weather optimism soon began to prove wide of the mark

ALL PICTS: MCKLEIN

Meeke was downbeat about his chances in the Citroen DS 3



## “I think it’s more than a little bit out of reach. We can’t do this with just driving”

Ott Tanak

he couldn’t cope with was a puncture and, when he clipped a kerb-like rock a couple of miles from the end of Dyfnant, the right-front tyre flattened immediately.

In all honesty, Tanak had struggled to contain Ogier’s pace on Friday’s polished-clean – even more slippery – rerun stages. Arriving at the start of SS8, he was 22.3s behind. Coming out the other end, the gap was 37.3s.

At just over half a minute, was the gap just out of reach? “I think you’re being kind,” smiled Tanak, “I think it’s more than a little bit out of reach. We can’t do this with just driving.”

That wouldn’t stop him trying, though. Quickest on four of day two’s seven forest stages, Tanak won the day by 3.5s.

Sunday merely rubbed salt into the wounds as Tanak wound the DMACK car up to win all six stages in a sublime display of driving talent. It also served as a timely reminder of exactly what

the M-Sport-built Fiesta is capable of. Tanak won the final day by an incredible 23.6s.

Victory in the weekend battle meant little to the men who’d had their eyes on winning the war just a couple of days earlier. Nothing’s as good as a win, but for man, machine and tyre, this came as close as possible.

### What happened to home rule?

For 27 years, foreign drivers didn’t get a look in on Rally GB. From Colonel Loughborough’s Lanchester in 1932, all the way through to Gerry Burgess in a Ford Zephyr in ’59, the RAC Rally was a Brit shoo-in. Then the Scandinavians arrived and ‘spoiled’ everything.

We waited 13 years for Roger Clark’s 1972 win, a success he repeated four years later. After ’76, a generation watched and waited. Eighteen events on and Colin McRae turned a rally lead into a rally win in ’94. >>

## WRC2 TITLE STILL OPEN

WHEN ESAPEKKA LAPPI HEARD THE CRUNCH, he feared the worst. Backing his Skoda into the trees on the opening stage of Rally GB wasn’t the best way to keep his WRC2 title hopes alive.

The Finn – a stranger to these parts, having never tackled Britain’s World Rally Championship counter before – knew the only thing that would keep his trip to the final round of the season in Australia alive was a win in Wales.

The Skoda Fabia bounced off one of Myherin’s beefier pines. Lappi (below) knocked it down to first gear and dropped the clutch. It worked. It went. Crack on.

He dropped 15.7 seconds to Teemu Suninen’s similar – but non-works – car, but remained in second place. A couple of stages later, Lappi was in the groove and had figured the forests out.

When Suninen dropped time with a high-speed spin on their return to Myherin later that same day, Lappi spotted an opportunity and pounced. Once he’d hit the front, he stayed there. And that was OK for Suninen. Second was still good enough for him to take the WRC2 title, just as long as Lappi’s factory team-mate Pontus Tidemand didn’t get past him.

But Tidemand put in a mindblowing run through the final stage to edge Suninen for second by 1.1s. So, now Lappi has to go to New South Wales and finish first or second to take the title.

Further down the order, second in class behind Martin Koci was enough for Simone Tempestini to add the WRC3 title to the Junior WRC award he sealed in Corsica.

Peugeot 208 driver Jose Lopez won the R2 class after fancied runners Rob Duggan and Chris Ingram hit trouble, although Ingram did make the finish in third behind Tom Williams’s Ford Fiesta. Guy Butler took a lonely RC4 class win in his Renault.



Stratos was a treat for rallying fans



EBREY

Neuville took the final podium place



## CHOLMONDELEY CHATTER

I'VE GOT TIME TO WRITE THIS COLUMN.

I hadn't planned to write it now, but there's nothing else to do. I'm sitting in a field in the middle of Cheshire. Going nowhere. And couldn't be happier about it.

The traffic jam to get out of Cholmondeley is massive. Massive like *massive*.

The World Rally Championship, it seems, is very welcome back in England.

Let's keep this in perspective: there were 1.11 miles of competition. And, while those 1.11 miles of competition were in some very green and very pleasant land, they were still just 1.11 miles of competition. We're certainly not talking the full 30-miler through Pundershaw or both sides of Grizedale.

Saturday's mile-long dash around Cholmondeley Castle was Rally GB's first trip back across the English-Welsh (Welsh-English, if you like!) border since the Cheltenham test on the opening day of the 1999 event. It might have been short in terms of the road, but it was long in symbolism.

Would it be folly to gauge the appetite for Rally GB's return to England on that one stage and a crowd-pleasing time control in Chester?

I thought so. Until I went to both and saw the crowds, talked to the people and heard the kind of enthusiasm I haven't heard for a while.

Cholmondeley, Chester and England were a huge success in terms of bringing the rally and the WRC to the people. Newcastle (the Geordie one, not the one in Staffordshire), Bradford and Lincoln were the furthest that folk had travelled in my mini-poll. It was Chester that

brought all of them back.

"Maybe it's a psychological thing," said Yorkshireman Andrew Elliott, "but to us, Chester is Manchester and Manchester isn't too far. Wales? That's miles away."

They'd booked a B&B and were Dyfi-bound the next morning. Would they be back?

"Definitely. We've had a word with the old girl in the B&B and she's got our names down for next year. It's been fantastic, fabulous atmosphere. I remember standing right here all those years ago and getting Ari Vatanen to sign the back of my packet of fags."

So, there you have it, definitive proof that Rally GB's trip over the border worked.

It certainly worked for the event. But did it work for Wales?

How could it not? Not for the first time in history, Wales took over a corner of Cheshire last week and spreading the word of what's on offer way out west can only be good for tourism.

There were some grumbles from some of the drivers who felt that it was a long way to come for such a short and meaningless stage, but they missed the point.

Sebastien Ogier? He got it. "The stage," he said, "the stage has three corners, or something. It's nothing. But have you seen the castle? It's fantastic. And Chester last night, OK, it was a long day and it was late when we got there, but I had never seen Chester before and it was a beautiful place with some beautiful buildings. And you saw the people there – if we can take the rally to the people like this, it's fantastic."

Couldn't agree more.

EBREY



EBREY

Those barren 18 years felt like a lifetime, and we're getting dangerously close to that number again – when we're back in Deeside in 12 months' time, it'll be 17 years since Richard Burns's 2000 win.

No pressure then, Kris Meeke. The Dungannon driver couldn't have been more up front about his chances ahead of the rally. "Unlikely" was how he described them. Rarely has "unlikely" sounded more like "absolutely no chance".

There were more than a few who were concerned at what they saw as something of a defeatist attitude from Citroen star Meeke. When, for example, had you heard McRae or Burns talking about having no chance when they came home in equal machinery? It didn't happen. They made this event their own and they ruled it for six WRC rounds in Britain.

It's as easy to look back fondly and remember the ballsy Brits walking on water as it's easy to talk about the running-order thing getting into Meeke's head and forcing him to concede before the thing's even begun.

But there's more to this one than meets the eye. Let's not forget, the



dampers on the DS 3 WRC can be traced back to 2007. Granted, there's been an evolution, but that's nothing like the revolution needed to keep pace with what Volkswagen has delivered. You only had to stand at the side of a slow or medium-speed corner in Wales to see where some of the time was going.

The Polo pitched and bucked under braking and acceleration, constantly feeling for the mechanical grip with the kind of subtlety that has always eluded Citroen and its DS 3. By contrast,

Ogier's Rally GB win was his fourth victory in a row

## “Sebastien’s earned his chance to run first after going through what he’s gone through this year”

Kris Meeke

Meeke's motor was sitting on top, solid, unflinching.

This worked perfectly in Finland, where a direct and precise car is needed to fire the thing from one high-speed curve and crest to another, but in Wales traction was at an absolute premium and the DS 3 WRC was exposed badly for the comparative dinosaur that it is.

If it were needed, further evidence came in from the scorched Michelins beneath Meeke and co-driver Paul Nagle.

“We struggle for traction,” said Meeke, “so we’re getting wheelspin in fourth gear in some stages. That wears the tyres, and when the tyres are worn we get even more wheelspin.”

Meeke's challenge for third was

stymied by tyre trouble of a more prosaic nature on Saturday. A couple of slow punctures on successive stages left him with no spares and even less reason to take risks on the second loop.

As much as anything, the weather scuppered Meeke's chances. If it had stayed dry, the DS 3 would have found more grip and Ogier's advantage at the front of the field would have been negated.

“Friday and Saturday were exactly the conditions we didn't want,” said Meeke. “We did everything we could, but I wasn't prepared to risk absolutely everything for another second or two. What would have been the point? There would have been a corner waiting... In all honesty, Sebastien's earned his chance >>

## BRITS IMPRESS

WITH SO MUCH ATTENTION FOCUSED ON KRIS Meeke and Craig Breen, it would have been easy to overlook any other crews sneaking across Offa's Dyke or the Irish Sea last week.

And that would have been to overlook some exceptional performances from some of the rising talent of British rallying. Fresh from his Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy title-winning drive in Spain a fortnight earlier was Osian Pryce. The Welshman was stepping up to WRC2 with a Mick Harris-run Ford Fiesta R5, where he would lock horns with season-long DDT rival Gus Greensmith, who employed M-Sport to run a similar motor on his behalf. They were joined by David Bogie (below) and his fellow British Rally Championship competitor Rhys Yates (Fiesta R5).

Bogie was the highest finisher, placing his Skoda Fabia R5 ninth in class, but that was only half the story. Where he had a clean run, the Scot was regularly capable of mixing it with the works Fabia of Jan Kopecky. As a demonstration of speed and ability, when everything clicked for Bogie, this was one of his finest outings yet.

Yates finished in 11th place, after spending three days continually levelling a steep learning curve.

As for Pryce and Greensmith, they both retired – but for very different reasons. Greensmith was out on day two after his co-driver Katrin Becker fell ill, but she recovered sufficiently for a final-day blast around north Wales. Pryce suffered a holed radiator when he was closing on a debut WRC2 top six on the final day.

Like Greensmith and Bogie, Pryce set some impressive times, but the heartbreaker for him came second time through his home stage in Dyfi. In the first three miles, Pryce slaughtered everybody, taking 6.7s out of Esaepkka Lappi and 9.7s out of Teemu Suninen. Then the power-steering broke.



to run first on the road after going through what he's gone through this year. I just hope he enjoyed it."

Meeke hadn't much enjoyed his time in Wales, but he wasn't interested in dwelling on the immediate past.

"Next year," he said, "it's up to me. I want to come here in a position to be challenging for the championship and if I'm challenging for the championship then I'm going to be in a similar position to him [Ogier – it's a natural assumption the Frenchman will be fighting for a fifth title] on the road. That'll mean I'm in much better shape to be fighting to win this rally."

Deeside and Dungannon, put that Welsh champagne on ice. Come back to us in a year.

Meeke's team-mates Craig Breen and Scott Martin started the event in pursuit

of a podium, only to suffer the same fate when the rain fell on Friday.

Breen's pace through Myherin was impressive: fourth fastest and 3.6s up on Meeke. He took another half a second in Sweet Lamb, but that was as good as it got for the Irish-English DS 3 crew – they rolled second time through Myherin.

"The start was good," said Breen. "The first stage felt horrible, but maybe that was the key. I wasn't chasing the time, the time came to me. I chased it in the next couple and maybe overdrove a bit and lost some time. Second time through Myherin, we hit a bank and rolled. I'm so disappointed – I was so looking forward to this event."

### VW's dream nightmare

Winning a fourth successive world championship is never going to be a bad



ALL PICS: MCKLEIN



Ogier even levitated off the podium



Breen set quick times until he hit a bank

result to take home from a rally, but Volkswagen team principal Sven Smeets admitted that Friday had given the Germans something of a scare.

All three Polos were hit by a front-driveshaft problem. Andreas Mikkelsen was troubled from the start, but Jari-Matti Latvala's and Ogier's issues arrived later in the day. Hannover held its breath. If Ogier hadn't made it out of Friday in one piece, that fourth title could have been in serious jeopardy given that the #1 Polo is not expected to feature in the final-round fight.

Latvala finished a forgettable seventh, Mikkelsen a tortured 12th – both of them deserved better.

The Norwegian's problems also cost him ground in the fight for second in the championship. Hyundai's Thierry Neuville moved 14 points clear with the final podium spot. Neuville and teammate Hayden Paddon fought throughout the event, but the Belgian always looked to have the edge. Certainly, both had the legs on Dani Sordo, who ended an event he never particularly enjoys in sixth, behind Meeke and just ahead of Latvala.

M-Sport factory drivers Mads Ostberg and Eric Camilli sandwiched a ninth-placed Stephane Lefebvre. The Citroen driver was making a very welcome return to the stages following his shocking Rally Germany crash in August.

Talking of welcome returns, Ogier made good on the promise he'd offered British fans 12 months earlier. He came back, won the rally, wore the smile and soaked an enthusiastic and utterly appreciative audience with champagne.

Last Sunday, everything went to plan. 🍾

**RESULTS** ROUND 12/13, RALLY GB, OCTOBER 27-30

POS	DRIVER	CO-DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	Sebastien Ogier (F)	Julien Ingrassia (F)	Volkswagen Motorsport · Volkswagen Polo RWRC	3h14m30.2s
2	Ott Tanak (EST)	Raigo Molder (EST)	DMACK World Rally Team · Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+10.2s
3	Thierry Neuville (B)	Nicolas Gilsoul (B)	Hyundai Motorsport · Hyundai i20 WRC	+1m35.4s
4	Hayden Paddon (NZ)	John Kennard (NZ)	Hyundai Motorsport N · Hyundai i20 WRC	+1m54.9s
5	Kris Meeke (GB)	Paul Nagle (IRL)	Abu Dhabi Total WRT · Citroen DS3 WRC	+2m35.2s
6	Dani Sordo (E)	Marc Marti (E)	Hyundai Motorsport · Hyundai i20 WRC	+4m02.6s
7	Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN)	Miikka Anttila (FIN)	Volkswagen Motorsport · Volkswagen Polo RWRC	+4m28.3s
8	Mads Ostberg (N)	Ola Floene (N)	M-Sport WRT · Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+4m38.3s
9	Stephane Lefebvre (F)	Gilles de Turckheim (F)	Abu Dhabi Total WRT · Citroen DS3 WRC	+7m12.2s
10	Eric Camilli (F)	Benjamin Veillas (F)	M-Sport WRT · Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+8m19.3s

**OTHERS**

12	Andreas Mikkelsen (N)	Anders Jager (N)	Volkswagen Motorsport II · Volkswagen Polo RWRC	+9m44.0s
15	Lorenzo Bertelli (I)	Simone Scattolin (I)	FWRT · Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+10m50.6s
17	Quentin Gilbert (F)	Renaud Jamoul (B)	Abu Dhabi Total WRT · Citroen DS3 WRC	+11m56.5s
38	Valeriy Gorban (UA)	Volodymyr Korsya (UA)	Eurolamp WRT · Mini John Cooper Works WRC	+53m26.3s
R	Craig Breen (IRL)	Scott Martin (GB)	Abu Dhabi Total WRT · Citroen DS3 WRC	SS5-accident

**DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP**

1 Ogier 247; 2 Neuville 143; 3 Mikkelsen 129; 4 Paddon 126; 5 Sordo 119; 6 Latvala 110; 7 Ostberg 94; 8 Tanak 82; 9 Meeke 64; 10 Breen 36.

**MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP**

1 Volkswagen Motorsport 355; 2 Hyundai Motorsport 285; 3 M-Sport WRT 154; 4 Volkswagen Motorsport II 138; 5 Hyundai Motorsport N 136; 6 DMACK World Rally Team 92.



Lancia Delta wows the crowd

**STAGE TIMES**

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 Myherin 1 19.77 miles	Ogier 18m07.0s	Ogier	Tanak +7.6s
SS2 Sweet Lamb 1 2.63 miles	Ogier 2m49.0s	Ogier	Tanak +12.1s
SS3 Hafren 1 21.83 miles	Tanak 20m45.4s	Ogier	Tanak +9.9s
SS4 Dyfnant 1 11.13 miles	Tanak 10m18.9s	Ogier	Tanak +7.7s
SS5 Myherin 2 19.77 miles	Ogier 18m01.4s	Ogier	Tanak +15.1s
SS6 Sweet Lamb 2 2.63 miles	Ogier 2m53.7s	Ogier	Tanak +17.4s
SS7 Hafren 2 21.83 miles	Ogier 20m58.6s	Ogier	Tanak +23.3s
SS8 Dyfnant 2 11.13 miles	Neuville 10m32.1s	Ogier	Tanak +37.3s
SS9 Pantperthog 1 5.99 miles	Tanak 5m47.1s	Ogier	Tanak +35.8s
SS10 Dyfi 1 13.12 miles	Ogier 12m01.2s	Ogier	Tanak +38.2s
SS11 Gartheiniog 1 7.05 miles	Neuville 7m00.9s	Ogier	Tanak +36.3s
SS12 Pantperthog 2 5.99 miles	Tanak 5m50.5s	Ogier	Tanak +33.4s
SS13 Dyfi 2 13.12 miles	Tanak 12m12.9s	Ogier	Tanak +30.6s
SS14 Gartheiniog 2 7.05 miles	Tanak 7m07.4s	Ogier	Tanak +24.8s
SS15 Aberhant 8.64 miles	Ogier 7m29.3s	Ogier	Tanak +31.8s
SS16 Cholmondeley Castle 1.12 miles	Mikkelsen 1m08.6s	Ogier	Tanak +33.8s
SS17 Clocaenog 1 4.78 miles	Tanak 4m19.0s	Ogier	Tanak +33.2s
SS18 Brenig 1 4.93 miles	Tanak 5m23.1s	Ogier	Tanak +29.7s
SS19 Alwen 1 6.47 miles	Tanak 5m42.1s	Ogier	Tanak +25.9s
SS20 Clocaenog 2 4.78 miles	Tanak 4m18.4s	Ogier	Tanak +23.0s
SS21 Alwen 2 6.47 miles	Tanak 5m39.7s	Ogier	Tanak +16.4s
SS22 Brenig 2 (Power Stage) 4.93 miles	Tanak 5m19.0s	Ogier	Tanak +10.2s

EUROPEAN F3/REVIEW

Emotion, moments  
after Stroll clinched  
the title at Imola





# Lance Strongarms the Formula 3 field

The championship was won methodically. Then Stroll, Prema's sixth successive F3 title winner, let rip with a blistering end-of-season run

By Marcus Simmons, Deputy Editor

[@MarcusSimmons54](#)

**A** bunch of people are waiting for the lift to take us back down from the press-conference room at Hockenheim after the final Formula 3 European Championship race – just a couple of journalists, the drivers, some team people. A remark to Lance Stroll: “You’re going to miss F3, aren’t you?” “Yeah I will, I really will,” he retorts. “You know, I was getting into the car this morning, thinking this was the last time, savouring every moment, and then we had to get out again because of the fog delay. So then I was getting in again, savouring every moment again, and then I had to get out for a pee. And then I had to get into it a third time, thinking, ‘Is this *really* the last time?!’”

This was the relaxed Stroll, the Canadian kid in a romance with motor racing. His championship secured; hot off the back of a trip to Montreal to just hang with his childhood friends, bringing a special one-off ‘farewell’ helmet for all his buddies from Prema Powerteam to sign, and that he would wear on the way to his first weekend clean sweep of all three race wins; an apparent Williams Formula 1 race deal in his pocket; laughing and joking in the paddock. It showed in his driving...

Until October’s final two rounds at Imola – where Stroll was crowned – and Hockenheim, this had been a methodical championship season from the driver and Prema, for whom this was the sixth consecutive title year in Euro F3. The preparation and execution – the team’s self-fabled ‘Prema Way’ – was exquisite. That methodology also encompasses caution, not taking too many risks,

whether that’s in wheel-to-wheel combat or leaving plenty of margin regarding track limits (it’s notable that, in this regard, Stroll was almost a stranger to the stewards, while others spent more time with the officials than their teams).

Added to that was the apparent support of team-mates Nick Cassidy and Maximilian Gunther, who threw away possible wins by providing no block to the path of Stroll when he was behind one, the other or both of them in races at Paul Ricard, Zandvoort and the Nurburgring. So until the teams assembled in Italy, our glimpses of Stroll brilliance were highlighted by skill in damp or wet qualifying sessions at Ricard, Pau and Spa, where each time he improvised brilliantly to take a resounding pole position in conditions that place a premium on technique and talent.

And then... You know when you hear a song by one of your favourite bands, and it’s kind of good, ticks the boxes, but doesn’t really move you, but then it bursts into a beautiful coda that has shivers running down your spine and you’re rushing to play it again? Think of *God Only Knows* by The Beach Boys, where towards the end most of the instruments drop out, and then with a machine-gun drum fill from Hal Blaine the musicians strike up again and the beautiful vocal harmonies soar and swirl, and you just want this to go on forever... Well, that’s what Stroll’s driving was like at Imola and Hockenheim. After a decent, admirable but not *thrilling* season, this was his beautiful coda.

The driving was fluid, the pace on cold tyres stunning, and he even answered >>



the lingering questions over his racecraft by winning a pass-repass-and-pass-again scrap with Joel Eriksson in the final race of the season. Pressure off; caution not required; time to show artistry.

Where had this arrived from? Stroll's a modest lad, and puts it down to experience gained over his two seasons in F3. "I think I had the speed in me last year, but it was more about putting the laps together and stuff," he muses. "So I'd do a corner well and then make a mistake the next corner, because I was discovering it as it went. So I was always learning last year throughout every lap, every corner, and I felt, 'Why is it rotating here and not there?'"

"And now I just kind of have it set in my mind what it's gonna be like – the grip, where it's gonna be, where last year it was coming to me as I was driving. And that's a really big difference – it's something you can't really force. You've got to let it come to you and it's time and experience in the seat. That's something I'm much better at this year, delivering that lap in qualifying that last year I could deliver from time to time, and sometimes I'd miss it and I'd be nowhere."

Stroll adds that "this year I just arrived

with so much confidence from the first race, and I knew that the pace was there and it was just about putting all the little details together to make it work. The beginning of the championship was a bit funny [after five races, Stroll had fewer podiums to his name than Guan Yu Zhou, who ended up 13th in points!], but at Red Bull Ring [round four] we just really kicked it into second gear and started scoring, you know, 68 points a weekend [from a maximum 75]. But we couldn't take a break in any session because as soon as we backed off a bit the others were going to come and get us."

Foremost among these, for much of the season anyway, were British talents George Russell and Callum Ilott. With big investment from Dimitri Mazepin, whose son Nikita was part of the driver line-up, Hitech GP signed up Russell as well as taking on former Prema technical director John McGill and forming an engineering partnership with the ART Grand Prix-affiliated AOTech. It looked like a formidable F3 supergroup, but Russell had almost unbelievable bad luck over the opening rounds. He lost two front-row starts at the Ricard opener when scrutineers couldn't quite extract enough



Series runner-up Gunther is attacked by Aron at Norisring



Eriksson clinched the rookie crown at Hockenheim finale

ROUND BY ROUND

**Paul Ricard**

- R1 Lance Stroll**
- R2 Callum Ilott**
- R3 Maximilian Gunther**

Cassidy leaves France as the series leader despite not winning a race. He allows Stroll to make an easy pass to win race one, loses the second with a mistake in slippery conditions that allows Ilott past, and gets pipped in a late scramble with Gunther in the finale.



**Hungaroring**

- R1 Ralf Aron**
- R2 Maximilian Gunther**
- R3 Ben Barnicoat**

Gunther is the new points leader after a dramatic weekend. The German beats Aron in race two, but clashes with Russell in the wet finale as they battle for the lead, allowing Barnicoat to win from Eriksson. Tyre troubles for Russell mean Aron wins race one from Kari.

**Pau**

- R1 Ben Barnicoat**
- R2 George Russell**
- R3 Alessio Lorandi**

It's two wet wins in a row for Barnicoat after poleman Stroll stalls at the start, while Cassidy grabs second from Gunther. Russell defeats Sette Camara in the second race, while Lorandi wins the finale – the Pau GP itself – under pressure from Stroll, who takes the series lead.



**Red Bull Ring**

- R1 Callum Ilott**
- R2 Lance Stroll**
- R3 Lance Stroll**

Two more victories for Stroll put him in command, with Ilott his closest rival in Austria. The Brit wins the first race, red-flagged after the dreadful crash of Li and Tveter. Stroll beats Ilott home in the other two, Ilott losing one of those seconds to Russell due to track limits.

**Norisring**

- R1 Lance Stroll**
- R2 Anthoine Hubert**
- R3 Lance Stroll**

Champion's luck? Stroll somehow escapes as Ilott, charging from mid-grid, outbrakes Stroll and himself to harpoon Eriksson out of the lead. Kari chases Stroll home. Hubert hits form to win the second race from Stroll, and follows the series leader home in the finale.





British buddies  
Russell and Stroll  
shone at Pau

fuel for a post-qualifying sample, he lost a win next time out at the Hungaroring when he suffered particularly badly from what was subsequently reported to have been a rare batch of rogue Hankook tyres, and then another win when he clashed with Gunther in a racing incident for which Russell was given a draconian grid penalty for the next race at... the almost-impossible-to-overtake-at street circuit of Pau.

Beyond that, it's fair to say that, however talented the individuals are, it always takes time for a new group to gel. Russell did win race two at Pau – a circuit where his talent put him a head above the opposition – but then only one more victory came his way. That was at Spa, where every team – especially Prema – struggled with odd track conditions. And, even here, a stall at the start of the final race prevented a further Russell victory.

Russell said that his car never felt as good as it had done at Pau until he arrived at Imola in October, but tyre strategy let Hitech down in first qualifying. Then at Hockenheim, where his machine felt superb again, >>



### Spa

- R1 Lance Stroll**
- R2 George Russell**
- R3 Joel Eriksson**

A soggy opener goes to Stroll from Gunther, but thereafter it's Russell who stars. The Brit passes Eriksson to win the second race, and recovers from stalling at the start of race three to take third. Up front, Eriksson finally breaks his duck, while Hubert takes a strong second.



### Zandvoort

- R1 Lance Stroll**
- R2 Nick Cassidy**
- R3 Maximilian Gunther**

Stroll sweeps around Cassidy and Gunther at the first corner to win the first race. Cassidy takes second in this one but, with Stroll at the back of the grid for the other two races due to an illegal front suspension, it's Cassidy and Gunther who share the other two race wins.



### Nurburgring

- R1 Lance Stroll**
- R2 Lance Stroll**
- R3 Maximilian Gunther**

No one can touch Stroll in the first race as he heads Gunther. In the second, Gunther leads most of the way before the pace slows and he offers no resistance to another Stroll victory. Gunther gets his reward in the finale, while Stroll shakes off Kari for second.

### Imola

- R1 Niko Kari**
- R2 Lance Stroll**
- R3 Lance Stroll**

With a cautious Stroll in points-collecting mode, Kari takes advantage with an audacious pass after a safety car to win the opener. Stroll then seals the deal in the second race, as Eriksson wins a scrap with Russell for second. Stroll dominates the last race from Russell.



### Hockenheim

- R1 Lance Stroll**
- R2 Lance Stroll**
- R3 Lance Stroll**

Stroll dominates the entire weekend. The first win comes as he emerges from an early collision with Gunther, who has to recover past Cassidy for second. Eriksson takes second – and claims the rookie title – in race two, and then loses a fight for the lead with Stroll in the early laps of the finale.



an engine failure ruined his weekend by leading to three 10-place grid penalties. What a lot of points were chucked away...

While Russell toiled, the seemingly carefree Ilott starred with Van Amersfoort Racing. After Ilott's brand-new car caught fire in the pre-weekend test before the Ricard opener, VAR borrowed T-Sport's ageing 2012 chassis, and this is the car in which the 17-year-old worked his magic until July. Ilott took an opportunist win at Ricard and a further success at the Red Bull Ring, and was also very strong at Pau. Strangely, the return of his '16 model coincided with a general downturn in form for the team, with Ilott unable to understand why he could be fast at some points in the weekend, and not so fast at others.

It was actually Motopark that provided the most consistent challenge to Prema over the bulk of the season. Rookie champion Joel Eriksson was the best of the Oschersleben-based team's quartet, and if he wasn't quite on form then one of the team's Red Bull Juniors – Sergio Sette Camara and Niko Kari – would be up there instead. Apart from Carlin, this was the only team using Volkswagen power against the Mercedes hordes, and Motopark suffered from reliability issues – and consequent grid penalties.

Perception is king, and over the past 12 months F3 has lost drivers (including a swathe of talents to GP3 in 2016) amid a climate where Prema is regarded as unbeatable. No disrespect to Prema, but

## “It should be remembered that 11 drivers won races”

this is why it was disappointing that no one driver from Hitech, VAR, Motopark and the rest could not pose a season-long threat to Stroll. It should be remembered that a record 11 drivers won races in '16 – and only four of them were with Prema – while in the penultimate race of the season at Hockenheim six different teams were represented in the top seven finishers. Grids were down, and this was arguably not a vintage year at the front in the vein of Ocon-Blomqvist-Verstappen in '14, but this year's influx of Formula Renault 2.0 and Formula 4 talent meant you'd be hard-pressed to find a season in which the lower reaches of the top 10 had better drivers than in '16.

Stroll didn't visit that territory very often. But there's every chance that, with more experience, one or more of them can wow us in the same way as this year's champion did once he was let loose from the championship shackles and showed us what he could do. Stroll had a great car, but he proved he is also a great F3 driver. 🌟



### CHAMPIONSHIP

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Lance Stroll (CDN)	Prema Powerteam	Dallara-Mercedes	1	DNF	5	4	8	3
2	Maximilian Gunther (D)	Prema Powerteam	Dallara-Mercedes	5	DNF	1	5	1	DNF
3	George Russell (GB)	Hitech GP	Dallara-Mercedes	3	11	18	DNF	4	DNF
4	Nick Cassidy (NZ)	Prema Powerteam	Dallara-Mercedes	2	2	2	DNF	16	9
5	Joel Eriksson (S)	Motopark	Dallara-Volkswagen	6	9	3	3	DNF	2
6	Callum Ilott (GB)	Van Amersfoort Racing	Dallara-Mercedes	10	1	12	DNF	9	6
7	Ralf Aron (EST)	Prema Powerteam	Dallara-Mercedes	7	DNF	7	1	2	DNS
8	Anthoine Hubert (F)	Van Amersfoort Racing	Dallara-Mercedes	17	8	6	DNF	13	14
9	Ben Barnicoat (GB)	Hitech GP	Dallara-Mercedes	4	DNF	11	9	10	1
10	Niko Kari (FIN)	Motopark	Dallara-Volkswagen	8	16	15	2	DNF	8
11	Sergio Sette Camara (BR)	Motopark	Dallara-Volkswagen	16	5	19	7	5	5
12	Mikkel Jensen (DK)	Mucke Motorsport	Dallara-Mercedes	13	4	4	10	7	11
13	Guan Yu Zhou (PRC)	Motopark	Dallara-Volkswagen	14	3	8	8	3	4
14	Alessio Lorandi (I)	Carlin	Dallara-Volkswagen	12	6	9	6	6	12
15	David Beckmann (D)	Mucke Motorsport	Dallara-Mercedes	-	-	-	-	-	-

16 Jake Hughes (Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen) 27; 17 Ryan Tveter (Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen) 26; 18 Harrison Newey (Van Amersfoort Racing Dallara-



Carlin couldn't run Piquet at Pau, but at least Lorandi won there

# From bad comes good

THERE WERE TIMES IN 2016 when Formula 3 seemed to be doing a pretty good job of aiming the barrel of the gun and shooting itself repeatedly in both feet.

The new three-seasons limit on experience (raised to four for 2017) meant European F3 lost Antonio Giovinazzi from a title challenge with Carlin to GP2, as well as one of the best ambassadors for junior motorsport – in the form of Tatiana Calderon – to GP3. With the market at this level shrinking, F3 lost other drivers to GP3 and GTs with the result that four teams dropped by the wayside for '16.

Once the season started, qualifying sessions and races were plagued by drivers being given penalties for track limits, hours afterwards in some cases. Together with cars being chucked out of scrutineering for what were often minor offences (a thimbleful short of the required fuel for a sample, or illegality caused by wear and tear), it meant that results were frequently changed long into the evening.

One driver lost his cool and badly assaulted another in the Hungaroring paddock and was given a pathetically light penalty, and Nelson Piquet Jr was barred from racing at Pau in what would have been one of the great stories of the season.

Then there was the palaver of whether new drivers, who had broken the 2016 testing regulations in rookie tests with a view to next season, should be allowed to compete in the Hockenheim finale to qualify themselves for Macau. It was a great opportunity to finish the season with a strong grid, but the teams bickered among themselves, and some of their number were tearing their hair out.

That did culminate in a feelgood story. Carlin had endured a dismal

**“Piquet was barred in what would have been one of the great stories”**

season, apart from Alessio Lorandi's Pau GP win and his strong weekend at Zandvoort. With Lorandi and Ryan Tveter quitting in the summer, and Peter Li recovering from his horrific Red Bull Ring crash, the British team had to miss two rounds. But at Hockenheim, GP3 racer Jake Hughes starred by qualifying twice on the front row, while Formula Renault Eurocup champion Lando Norris showed great promise.

With David Beckmann also up

in the mix – he only lost a pole because of one of those scrutineering snafus – it proved that another of F3's currently unfashionable teams, Mücke Motorsport, could be up there too.

At the same time, the FIA is on the case to try to boost F3 for 2017. The governing body takes a lot of stick, but the people there love racing and mean well. The problem is that a lot of these issues from '16 are because, as motorsport's governing body, everything has to be seen to be fair and transparent with correct procedures followed at all times. As such, it's tough for decisions over sporting matters to be taken on the hoof.

Dallara introduces a new aero update kit for the F3 chassis this winter, with an accompanying ban on windtunnel usage. The FIA is also working with the promoter – the Formel 3 Vermarktungs subsidiary of the DTM-promoting ITR – on attractive prize funds and cost-cutting and commercial deals that may allow non-European races. Together with a relaxing of some of the team-and-driver regulations introduced for 2016, this could at least stop grid sizes declining further in the short term and provide a solid foundation for the longer-term future. And some good news, of course.

7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	PTS
9	4	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	DNF	19	1	19	4	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	507
3	14	13	3	6	3	DNF	3	5	4	2	1	2	7	6	2	2	1	12	DNF	11	2	8	9	322
4	1	3	4	2	DNF	3	9	DNF	7	9	5	5	1	3	3	DNF	7	4	3	2	7	6	DNF	274
2	16	DNF	6	DNF	10	6	4	6	2	1	2	4	17	5	4	DNF	5	10	7	8	3	DNF	4	254
14	9	6	17	14	6	DNF	5	DNF	12	10	7	14	2	1	7	3	6	3	2	5	6	2	2	252
5	3	4	1	4	2	DNF	7	7	5	3	6	16	5	DNF	5	7	4	15	DNF	3	DNF	EXC	DNF	226
13	6	15	9	12	9	4	10	9	14	6	8	8	14	13	6	4	14	7	4	4	4	5	8	176
12	7	12	16	10	16	8	1	2	9	4	10	DNF	4	2	10	5	9	5	6	6	10	7	10	160
1	5	11	10	15	5	5	DNF	EXC	18	8	9	3	11	20	9	DNF	10	8	DNF	12	18	9	7	134
19	11	8	20	3	8	2	12	DNF	6	11	11	11	10	7	8	10	3	1	9	DNF	14	12	13	129
8	2	DNF	12	8	4	DNF	DNF	3	11	17	15	15	DNF	15	11	8	8	DNF	DNF	14	5	14	6	117
6	8	5	5	5	DNF	7	8	DNF	15	13	12	DNF	3	9	15	13	17	11	10	7	DNF	15	DNS	107
11	DNF	DNF	13	11	7	DNF	6	4	16	18	16	17	8	11	12	12	12	6	5	10	11	13	11	101
10	15	1	11	9	17	12	DNF	8	3	5	4	10	13	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	96
17	DNF	DNF	7	7	12	10	13	DNF	10	7	3	7	16	10	13	6	13	DNF	DNF	9	12	3	18	67

Mercedes) 22; 19 Pedro Piquet (Van Amersfoort Racing Dallara-Mercedes) 19; 20 Nikita Mazepin (Hitech GP Dallara-Mercedes) 10; 21 Arjun Maini (T-Sport Dallara-NBE) 3; 22 Raoul Hyman (Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen) 1.

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## AUTOSPORT'S TOP 10 DRIVERS

**1 LANCE STROLL**

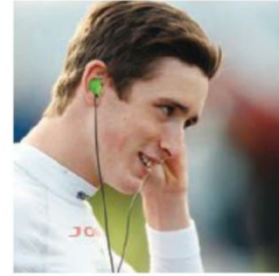
There were a couple of early-season hiccups, when he didn't quite get on it in qualifying, but once he kicked into gear he was unstoppable. Even then, we didn't see him at his best until October, when the pressure was off. By every metric he was on top: an almost 50% strike rate of wins and poles; the best average of weekend fastest laps; number one on mean and median-average supergrids; best qualifying record; best race fastest laps record. Money buys a lot, but Stroll transcended that: by the time the season finished people were talking about his ability, not his wealth.

**2 GEORGE RUSSELL**

He was narrowly pipped by Stroll for fifth in the overall 2015 rankings and, if it hadn't been for a litany of misfortunes and disasters, he might have been not too far adrift in '16 either. There seemed to be almost an air of conspiracy theory around Russell and Hitech GP early on when stewards' decisions and on-track antics invariably went against them, but he bounced back in style. He did make the odd error, which is why he was #2 in this list even before Stroll's end-of-season tour de force. Great driver though, who is tipped to switch to GP3 and would be a title favourite.

**3 CALLUM ILOTT**

The end of the season was a bit of a disaster for the Brit and Van Amersfoort Racing, best summed up by losing a Hockenheim podium because of insufficient fuel for a sample. That makes it easy to forget that until July he was more or less Stroll's biggest challenger. The spectacular driving style everyone enjoyed in 2015 was more controlled in '16, but Ilott still gets it lit when necessary – just not at every corner anymore. There was a bit of head-scratching late in the year and perhaps his confidence was dented, but Ilott will be a red-hot title contender if, as expected, he returns in '17.

**4 JOEL ERIKSSON**

Even when fellow rookies Aron, Barnicoat and Hubert beat him to their maiden wins, Eriksson stood out as the best newcomer in 2016. His Motopark car looked alive on the track, and it was just a question of honing things, getting everything right in qualifying, because the young Swede is a terrific racer. That belated first win came at Spa in late July (followed by a Masters of F3 success), by which time Eriksson was already making himself popular with BMW as a DTM junior... He's the real deal, and one more year in F3 would make him a polished talent ready to take the DTM by storm.

**5 MAXIMILIAN GUNTHER**

This amazingly fast German has a great skill and touch in quick corners, and took a raft of five consecutive poles early in the season in Prema's ex-Rosenqvist 2015 title-winning car. But despite finishing runner-up in the points his season was blighted by a frustrating inconsistency. His speed is beyond doubt, but he is perhaps not the strongest driver mentally and there were several mistakes. It's like if he were a singer, you'd always need to book him plenty of studio hours because you'd know he wouldn't nail the first take but would do something wonderful if you gave him enough time.

**6 NICK CASSIDY**

It's a measure of the high reputation of the Kiwi that a season netting him fourth in the points should be viewed as a disappointment. It also reflects the quality of the top six that he holds this position in our rankings. Certainly there was a very long run of bad luck – dodgy tyres in Hungary, a down-on-power engine in Austria, gearbox failure at the Norisring. Also, Cassidy was jetting between Europe and his Super GT programme in Japan. On the other hand, errors at Paul Ricard and Hungaroring cost him wins. This season he didn't quite do what we know he can do.

**7 SERGIO SETTE CAMARA**

The only driver in our top 10 never to have won an F3 race; yet paradoxically, he's one of the fastest drivers on the grid. Hopes were high for the Brazilian in his second year with Motopark, and a new place on the Red Bull Junior programme should have given him momentum. But there seems to be a serious inconsistency problem. In 2016 he was capable of being fastest in qualifying, but dumped to 11th on the grid with an engine-change grid penalty, and then a couple of hours later, penalty free, labouring to 14th for no apparent reason. A baffling case, but great latent talent.

**8 ANTOINE HUBERT**

A programme that came together late with Van Amersfoort Racing meant this friendly, intelligent Frenchman had little preparation. Two years on those lovely Michelins in FR2.0 meant it took time to adjust to the harder F3 Hankooks. He struggled to nail a lap in qualifying early in the season; later in the year he could sometimes outqualify team-mate Ilott – no mean feat – but plateau a little too early in the weekend. He's working on trying to get a deal to stay in F3 for 2017, and the experience from this year and a proper winter test programme would make him a strong contender.

**9 BEN BARNICOAT**

Two wins in the wet early on illustrated the ability of the East Midlander, but perversely the brighter days were the darker ones for him. He started off impressively, chasing Hitech team-mate Russell home for fourth in the Ricard opener, but he sparked a chain-reaction shunt in race two, and it would not be the last time he was involved in incidents. He's an absolutely super bloke, but some say he needs to 'get a bit of bastard' in him. Uncertainty over his future certainly won't have helped the Racing Steps protege's state of mind late in the season, and that's a shame.

**10 RALF ARON**

The amiable scarf-clad Estonian looked very good early on with Prema, and became the first F3 rookie to win a race in 2016. After that he went on a slump before pulling himself back to an upward trajectory at the end. Aron explained that the first two race weekends were preceded by official tests, making it easier for the rookies to perform, but that when this luxury disappeared it was tougher. There is an element of truth to this, but he also went backwards too often in mid-season races. Late form suggests it's all coming together and he'd be an ace if he returns.



## Dovizioso ends his wait for Ducati win

**MOTOGP**  
**SEPANG (MAL)**  
**OCTOBER 30**  
**ROUND 17/18**

ANDREA DOVIZIOSO IS WELL-LIKED within the MotoGP paddock, as a quality racer on-track and a respected, sensible figure off it. But even he would have had to be tiring of talk of becoming the 'next' winner in an unpredictable 2016 season, before breaking through in last weekend's Malaysian Grand Prix.

From the time when the streak of different winners emerged mid-year, Ducati's Dovizioso was viewed as a prime candidate to extend it. It reached a peak at Motorland Aragon in September, by which time the Italian really was the most-likely 'ninth in nine', but that event ended in frustration.

The attention shifted somewhat thereafter, replaced by Marc Marquez winning the title, but the consensus was still that if there were to be a ninth MotoGP race winner in 2016, it would probably be Dovizioso.

After all, he was already a grand prix winner and regular podium visitor, riding Ducati's competitive Desmosedici, and had looked more than capable of winning on several occasions.

But those chances slipped through his fingers. At Assen he crashed out of second place in the rain, just before Valentino Rossi threw away the lead. A mistimed bike change at the Sachsenring

and tyre troubles at Brno were also costly in mixed-weather races he led.

But the hardest pill to swallow was probably not being the rider to end Ducati's dry spell – approaching six years – at the Red Bull Ring in August. That honour went to his team-mate Andrea Iannone, who made the correct tyre choice and led home Dovizioso on a circuit tailor-made for the red bikes.

In Malaysia, finally and mercifully, it stuck for Dovizioso, who Ducati favoured over Iannone to stick around and partner Jorge Lorenzo next year.

Wet weather dominated the weekend. Dovizioso qualified on pole and was in the thick of the lead fight all race. For most of the 19 laps he was there with Iannone, Rossi, Marquez and Cal Crutchlow. The key players were the Italians, Yamaha star Rossi the meat in a Ducati sandwich, Dovizioso leading briefly on the first lap, then settling into third.

Rossi tried several times to get ahead of Iannone, including at Turns 4 and 9 on lap five, and Turn 1 on lap six, but couldn't make it stick.

Eventually Rossi found his way into the lead, overtaking Iannone at Turn 9 on lap 11, the start of a dramatic chain of events. Over the course of two laps, Crutchlow at Turn 2, Marquez at Turn 11 and Iannone – having been passed by Dovizioso – at Turn 9 all crashed.

Suddenly it was Rossi versus Dovizioso with seven laps to go. Three laps later it was all about Dovizioso, capitalising on a Rossi error at Turn 1





Dovizioso passed Rossi on his way to his first victory for Ducati

DUCATI

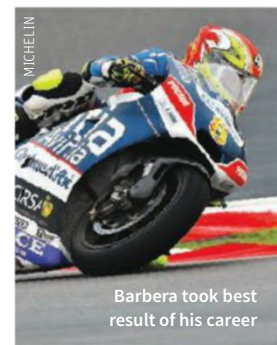
**RESULTS** ROUND 17/18, SEPANG (MAL), OCTOBER 30, 19 LAPS – 65.441 MILES

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	Andrea Dovizioso (I)	Ducati	42m27.333s
2	Valentino Rossi (I)	Yamaha	+3.115s
3	Jorge Lorenzo (E)	Yamaha	+11.924s
4	Hector Barbera (E)	Avintia Ducati	+19.916s
5	Loris Baz (F)	Avintia Ducati	+21.353s
6	Maverick Vinales (E)	Suzuki	+22.932s
7	Alvaro Bautista (E)	Aprilia	+25.829s
8	Jack Miller (AUS)	Marc VDS Honda	+32.746s
9	Pol Espargaro (E)	Tech3 Yamaha	+33.704s
10	Danilo Petrucci (I)	Pramac Ducati	+34.280s
11	Marc Marquez (E)	Honda	+36.480s
12	Eugene Laverty (IRL)	Pull & Bear Aspar Ducati	+36.638s
13	Alex Espargaro (E)	Suzuki	+36.897s
14	Bradley Smith (GB)	Tech3 Yamaha	+45.609s
15	Scott Redding (GB)	Pramac Ducati	+49.779s
16	Hiroshi Aoyama (J)	Honda	+52.665s
17	Stefan Bradl (D)	Aprilia	+52.784s
18	Tito Rabat (E)	Marc VDS Honda	+54.891s
R	Andrea Iannone (I)	Ducati	12 laps-accident
R	Cal Crutchlow (GB)	LCR Honda	11 laps-accident
R	Yonny Hernandez (CO)	Pull & Bear Aspar Ducati	11 laps-tyres



The ninth winner of MotoGP 2016

MICHELIN



Barbera took best result of his career

MICHELIN

to move into the lead and cruise to the chequered flag, winning by 3.115 seconds.

More than seven years and 31 podium finishes after his first MotoGP victory, with Honda at Donington Park in July 2009, Dovizioso had a second. And, crucially, his first with Ducati, which he joined at its low ebb in '13.

"In Austria, the thing was that the victory was mine," Dovizioso said. "I made the wrong decision with the rear tyre; I was very disappointed at that time. That weekend I rode I think in a perfect way. To get a result now, this year, at the end of the season, is very important.

"We can't forget four years ago – it was very bad, our situation. Now we are in a completely different situation, we can speak about the dry and fight for the podium in many races. I'm proud about that."

Rossi had front-tyre concerns late on, and noted that his three race crashes in 2016 played a role in backing off and settling for second, rather than trying to fight Dovizioso.

With the result, he wrapped up second in the championship over Yamaha team-mate Lorenzo, but it wasn't all bad news for the outgoing champion. Lorenzo was more competitive than he has been all year in the wet, qualifying and finishing third, although admitted he was "lucky" in the race, aided by the falls ahead of him.

Avintia Ducati netted fourth and fifth, with Hector Barbera and Loris Baz, Barbera passing his team-mate four laps from home to secure a career-best MotoGP finish.

It was another tough wet race for Suzuki, with Maverick Vinales a distant and frustrated sixth, and Alex Espargaro 13th, while Alvaro Bautista finished seventh to make it three top-10 finishes in the last four GPs for the emerging Aprilia.

Marquez made his way from 15th to 11th after his second race fall in seven days, leaving Marc VDS's Jack Miller as top Honda finisher in eighth.

MITCHELL ADAM

**Winner's average speed** 92.483mph. **Fastest lap** Dovizioso 2m11.950s, 93.969mph.

**QUALIFYING 2**

1 **Dovizioso** 2m11.485s; 2 **Rossi** 2m11.731s; 3 **Lorenzo** 2m11.787s; 4 **Marquez** 2m11.874s; 5 **Crutchlow** 2m12.558s; 6 **Iannone** 2m12.598s; 7 **A Espargaro** 2m12.869s; 8 **Vinales** 2m12.981s; 9 **Bautista** 2m13.325s; 10 **Baz** 2m13.452s; 11 **P Espargaro** 2m13.707s; 12 **Barbera** 2m13.973s.

**QUALIFYING 1**

1 **Crutchlow** 2m11.591s; 2 **Baz** 2m12.884s; 3 **Smith** 2m12.898s; 4 **Miller** 2m12.907s; 5 **Petrucci** 2m13.776s; 6 **Bradl** 2m13.850s; 7 **Aoyama** 2m14.179s; 8 **Redding** 2m14.433s; 9 **Laverty** 2m14.769s; 10 **Hernandez** 2m14.786s; 11 **Rabat** 2m15.894s.

**RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP**

1 **Marquez** 278; 2 **Rossi** 236; 3 **Lorenzo** 208; 4 **Vinales** 191; 5 **Dovizioso** 162; 6 **Pedrosa** 155; 6 **Crutchlow** 141; 8 **P Espargaro** 124; 9 **Barbera** 97; 10 **Iannone** 96; 11 **A Espargaro** 85; 12 **Laverty** 77; 13 **Bautista** 76; 13 **Redding** 72; 15 **Petrucci** 71; 16 **Bradl** 60; 17 **Miller** 56; 18 **Smith** 55; 19 **Pirro** 36; 20 **Baz** 35; 21 **Rabat** 29; 22 **Hernandez** 20; 23 **Nakasuga** 5; 24 **Lowes** 3; 25 **Aoyama** 1; 26 **Hayden** 1; 27 **Jones** 1.

**MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP**

1 **Honda** 349; 2 **Yamaha** 328; 3 **Ducati** 245; 4 **Suzuki** 197; 5 **Aprilia** 95.



Iannone fought with Rossi, with Dovizioso stalking

MICHELIN

# Russians rushing to victories

**FORMULA V8 3.5**

**JEREZ (E)**

**OCTOBER 29-30**

**ROUND 8/9**

JEREZ'S FORMULA V8 3.5 ROUND SET up a tough-to-call seven-way shootout ahead of this weekend's Barcelona decider.

After riding out a turbulent weekend, Fortec Motorsport's standout rookie Louis Deletraz left Andalusia with a slender, three-point championship lead. The Swiss racer was involved in a controversial clash with chief title rival – and long-time series leader – Tom Dillmann. Left dismayed at the imposition of a penalty for his role in the accident, Deletraz bounced back with a strong second on Sunday.

Isolated from the boiling title fight, GP3 race winner Jack Aitken made a stunning debut for RP Motorsport. The Briton set pole for race one and, although the result was contested owing to a bodywork dispute, Aitken underlined his speed by qualifying on the front row on Sunday.

Aitken's lack of experience manifested itself in an appalling start in race one, presenting an opportunity for Russian teen Matevos Isaakyan, who picked up a first win. On an afternoon when Dillmann and Deletraz non-scored, Isaakyan's SMP Racing team-mate Matthieu Vaxiviere was flushed with distress after losing a likely victory in a minor grass-cutting moment. But a solid pair of third places maintains his previously faltering title aspirations.



DUTCH PHOTO AGENCY

Egor Orudzhev became the first competitor to score four wins in 2016 on Sunday, but Arden's hard charger is still only sixth in the points race.

Dillmann has, arguably, the most reason for concern, and voiced his bemusement over the disappearance of his early-season speed. His racecraft, however, remains intact. Following the chaos caused when Aitken's car slipped into anti-stall away from the lights on Saturday, the opportunist AVF racer jumped from seventh to fourth, ahead of Deletraz.

The contentious accident fell on lap 16. Deletraz, who had fleetingly passed Dillmann three corners earlier, staged a second overtaking bid at Turn 9. Both were committed to the corner, and the ensuing crash knocked Dillmann into the gravel.

On the restart following a brief safety car period, Vaxiviere maintained his lead until the Senna Chicane, where he ran deep and failed to make the apex, admitting fault for allowing his rear brakes to cool down excessively. Isaakyan took

**Isaakyan leads Orudzhev. Both Russians won races**

advantage and held off compatriot Orudzhev to win by half a second.

A dismayed Deletraz was handed a 10-second penalty that dropped him out of the points, but the Swiss youngster bounced back with pole in race two.

Orudzhev executed the start of the season to leap from fifth into the lead at Turn 1, setting up victory from Deletraz. Aitken dropped two spots at the start to take fourth, leading Beitske Visser in her strongest showing of the season.

**PETER MILLS**

## RESULTS

**Race 1** 1 Matevos Isaakyan 27 laps in 43m04.008s; 2 Egor Orudzhev +0.513s; 3 Matthieu Vaxiviere; 4 Aurelien Panis; 5 Rene Binder; 6 Yu Kanamaru; 7 Beitske Visser; 8 Roy Nissany; 9 Pietro Fittipaldi; 10 Vitor Baptista. **Race 2** 1 Orudzhev 27 laps in 42m07.482s; 2 Louis Deletraz +2.019s; 3 Vaxiviere; 4 Jack Aitken; 5 Visser; 6 Isaakyan; 7 Binder; 8 Tom Dillmann; 9 Alfonso Celis Jr; 10 Kanamaru. **Points** 1 Deletraz 200; 2 Dillmann 197; 3 Vaxiviere 175; 4 Panis 171; 5 Nissany 169; 6 Orudzhev 166.

# Tung and Menezes open the season in style

**ASIAN LE MANS SERIES**

**ZHUHAI (PRC)**

**OCTOBER 30**

**ROUND 1/4**



Menezes topped the podium with Tung in China

HO-PIN TUNG AND GUSTAVO Menezes took honours in the four-hour opener with their Eurasia Motorsport-run DC Racing ORECA-Nissan 03R.

The Dutch-Chinese and Brazilian-American benefited from a safety car to pit after a cut tyre had caused a radiator blockage. They had stern opposition from the Algarve Pro Racing Ligier-Nissan of Nicky Catsburg, Andrea Pizzitola and Michael Munemann, but a drivethrough penalty for contact with the Race Performance ORECA-Judd of Struan Moore meant they were playing catch-up.

The trio finished third, behind the sister APR Ligier of Andrea Roda, Matt McMurry and Tacksung Kim.

Nigel Moore led LMP3 early on in the Tockwith Ligier he shared with Philip Hanson, but it was fellow Brit James

Winslow who claimed the spoils to complete a race double for DC Racing.

GT provided a close battle between two Ferraris, with the Spirit of Race entry of Rui Aguas, Marco Cioci and Nasrat Muzayyin pipping the Matt Griffin-led AF Corse line-up by just over a second.

## RESULTS

**1 Ho-Pin Tung/Gustavo Menezes (ORECA-Nissan 03R)** 146 laps in 4h00m35.623s; 2 Tacksung Kim/Andrea Roda/Matt McMurry (Ligier-Judd JSP2) +43.972s; 3 Michael Munemann/Nicky Catsburg/Andrea Pizzitola (L-Nissan JSP2); 4 James Winslow/David Cheng/Pu Jun Jin (L-N JSP3); 5 Rui Aguas/Marco Cioci/Nasrat Muzayyin (Ferrari 488 GT3); 6 Matt Griffin/Keita Sawa/Mok Weng Sun (Ferrari). **LMP3** 1 Winslow/Cheng/Pu; 2 Nigel Moore/Philip Hanson (Ligier); 3 Hanss Lin/Julio Acosta (Ligier). **GT** 1 Aguas/Cioci/Muzayyin; 2 Griffin/Sawa/Mok; 3 Kei Cozzolino/Corey Lewis/Adrian Zaugg (Lambo Huracan).



Johnson has made the final-four showdown

## Johnson makes it to finale

**NASCAR SPRINT CUP**  
**MARTINSVILLE (USA)**  
**OCTOBER 30**  
**ROUND 33/36**

JIMMIE JOHNSON BECAME THE FIRST DRIVER to qualify for the NASCAR Sprint Cup shootout at Homestead by an astonishing win after overcoming fuel issues at Martinsville.

The six-time champion suffered minor bodywork damage in the first half in a dice with Denny Hamlin, although he remained in the top 10.

But a caution after Chase contender Carl Edwards seared into the wall caused confusion throughout the field, thanks to a handful of leaders having been in the pits when the yellows came out.

Crew chiefs were scratching their heads over who was leading, made all the more baffling by Johnson and AJ Allmendinger running out of fuel.

It was the Joe Gibbs Racing pair of Denny Hamlin and Kyle Busch, who were on their way out of the pits when the caution fell, who benefited most. Johnson, meanwhile, managed his few fumes remaining long enough for the pits to open under the caution before diving in for fuel, and found himself third on the restart.

The Hendrick Chevrolet had strong pace, and within 25 laps of the half-mile oval had passed the pair for victory, as Brad Keselowski stole second.

### RESULTS

**1 Jimmie Johnson (Chevrolet SS)** 500 laps in 3h20m55s; **2 Brad Keselowski (Ford Fusion)** +1.291s; **3 Denny Hamlin (Toyota Camry)**; **4 Matt Kenseth (Toyota)**; **5 Kyle Busch (Toyota)**; **6 Jeff Gordon (Chevy)**; **7 Martin Truex Jr (Toyota)**; **8 Jamie McMurray (Chevy)**; **9 Joey Logano (Ford)**; **10 AJ Allmendinger (Chevy)**. **Round of 8 1 Johnson 4044**; **2 Hamlin 4039**; **3 Kenseth 4039**; **4 Kyle Busch 4037**; **5 Logano 4033**; **6 Kevin Harvick 4021**; **7 Kurt Busch 4019**; **8 Carl Edwards 4005**.

## Kunimoto takes last-gasp title

**SUPERFORMULA**  
**SUZUKA (J)**  
**OCTOBER 30**  
**ROUND 7/7**

YUJI KUNIMOTO WAS CROWNED SUPER Formula champion for the first time as Stoffel Vandoorne bowed out of Japan by winning the final race of his pre-Formula 1 career.

Kunimoto won the first encounter, after getting the jump on the sister Cerumo-Inging Dallara-Toyota of polesitter Hiroaki Ishiura at the start. Andre Lotterer also got a strong start from fourth on the grid to take second in his TOM'S Dallara-Toyota, with Ishiura finishing third.

Ishiura got pole again for race two, but he could not stop Vandoorne from thrusting the Dandelion Dallara-Honda into the lead at Turn 1. The Belgian led Ishiura and Lotterer up to the mandatory

pitstops, before the German made a relatively early stop. Vandoorne and Ishiura pitted together and rejoined still first and second, but now Lotterer was right on the tail of Ishiura.

Two late safety cars – the second due to an incident that moved Kunimoto up to sixth – left a four-lap sprint to the finish. Lotterer passed Ishiura into Turn 1 and set off after Vandoorne, knowing that if he got past he would wrest the championship title. But Vandoorne kept his cool and crossed the line 0.726 seconds to the good, meaning that Kunimoto was crowned champion.

Pre-weekend series leader Yuhi Sekiguchi had a nightmare. Following a bad qualifying, the Team Impul driver was 18th in race one after being given a penalty for contact with Vandoorne, and could only manage eighth in race two. The Super Formula rookie therefore dropped to third in the points.

### JIRO TAKAHASHI

### RESULTS

**Race 1 1 Yuji Kunimoto (Dallara-Toyota)** 19 laps in 31m58.809s; **2 Andre Lotterer (D-T)** +1.772s; **3 Hiroaki Ishiura (D-T)**; **4 Tomoki Nojiri (D-Honda)**; **5 Kazuki Nakajima (D-T)**; **6 Bertrand Baguette (D-H)**; **7 Takashi Kogure (D-H)**; **8 Joao Paulo de Oliveira (D-T)**; **9 Kamui Kobayashi (D-T)**; **10 Daisuke Nakajima (D-H)**. **Race 2 1 Stoffel Vandoorne (D-H)** 35 laps in 1h08m32.427s; **2 Lotterer** +0.726s; **3 Ishiura**; **4 de Oliveira**; **5 Baguette**; **6 Kunimoto**; **7 Kobayashi**; **8 Yuhi Sekiguchi (D-T)**; **9 Kogure**; **10 D Nakajima**. **Points 1 Kunimoto 33**; **2 Lotterer 30**; **3 Sekiguchi 28.5**; **4 Vandoorne 27**; **5 Ishiura 27**; **6 K Nakajima 22**.



Kunimoto leads Lotterer, and beat him to title

## IN BRIEF

### EUROFORMULA OPEN

Leonardo Pulcini wrapped up the title with victory in the second race of the penultimate round at Jerez. Carlin driver Colton Herta won the first race, while Pulcini had to pass debutant Harrison Scott and then Damiano Fioravanti as he charged to second. The Campos Racing car of Pulcini beat polewinner Ferdinand Habsburg at the start of race two and the Italian led all the way, with Habsburg second from Scott and Herta.

### SPANISH FORMULA 4

Dutch Red Bull Junior Richard Verschoor was already champion, but won all three races of the final round at Jerez. In race one, from fifth on the grid, he hunted down Nikita Volgegov to pass and win. In the second he headed Alexander Vartanyan, who had passed Volgegov. Verschoor headed home Vartanyan in the finale.

### ITALIAN FORMULA 4

Mick Schumacher starred in the final round at Monza but could not prevent Argentinian Marcos Siebert from taking the crown. Prema Powerteam ace Schumacher sailed into the distance in race one, while Siebert (Jenzer Motorsport) and Raul Guzman climbed from low grid positions to fill the podium. Mucke Motorsport's Sebastian Fernandez won the second race after a scrap with Guzman and Juri Vips, while fifth was enough for Siebert to claim the title as Schumacher was forced pitwards to replace a damaged front wing. Schumacher stormed from 26th to second in the finale, as Prema team-mate Vips took his first Italian F4 win, with Guatemalan Ian Rodriguez third.

### NACAM FORMULA 4

Esteban Gutierrez may have had a tough Mexican Grand Prix, but at least the Martiga-EG team to which he lends his initials had success in the F4 support races. Alexis Carreno dedicated his first-race win to Gutierrez, before Guyanese Calvin Ming triumphed in the second.

### MOTO2

Johann Zarco became Moto2's first back-to-back champion, securing the title with a commanding Sepang victory. Zarco qualified on pole in the wet by 2.134s and bided his time in second place initially in drying conditions. After passing Franco Morbidelli with six laps to go, he pulled away to win by 3.256s.

### MOTO3

Mahindra's Francesco Bagnaia claimed his second win of the season, after three early pile-ups decimated the lead pack at Sepang. First-lap incidents at Turns 2 and 6 were followed by another at Turn 7 on lap two, and Bagnaia won by 7.108s over Jakub Kornfeil and Bo Bendsneyer.

### FRENCH CARRERA CUP

Supercup title contender Mathieu Jaminet finished his dominant domestic season with a crushing pair of wins at Paul Ricard. Julien Andlauer chased him home in both races.

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The roles will be based in Milton Keynes and some roles will require travel both inside and outside of the UK.

### **Engineers**

#### **Energy Recovery System (ERS) Engineers**

- Systems engineering leadership, required to support trackside activity and factory development & tests.
- Trackside engineers will need Formula 1 trackside experience or equivalent and will be required to participate in frequent race travel.

#### **Energy Storage System (ESS) Production Systems Engineers**

- Required to support development, production & tests.
- Will carry out production tests to ensure packs are built correctly.

#### **Senior Design Engineers /Design Engineers**

- Required to support the ESS team.
- Design Engineers will need exposure to one or more of the following areas: Composites, ESS, ERS, Battery Systems, Cooling Systems, High Voltage (electrical components), rotating parts.
- In addition, Senior Design Engineer will be required to lead the Design Engineers.

#### **Electrical Engineers**

- Required to design wiring harnesses, specification of connectors, design of PCBs

#### **Software Engineers**

- Software development for control & system calibration, dyno, mission control
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#### **ESS R&D Test Engineers**

- Required to set up and carry out various rig tests to proof out the new design or to find out the root cause of the failure

#### **ESS Reliability Engineers**

- Responsible for fault tracking, FMEA and design for ESS reliability

### **Technicians**

#### **ERS Technicians**

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### **Technical Buyers**

#### **Senior Technical Buyer / Technical Buyer**

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## Sales Executive

We are now seeking a Sales Executive to join our motorsport sales teams.

### The Role

As a Sales Executive you will be responsible for generating revenue from existing and new clients. You will have to be inquisitive in order to engage in credible conversations with your clients and uncover new revenue streams. As such, an appreciation and understanding of motorsport is a bonus, although not required.

You will have clear objectives from day one, with a probationary review after 3 months and performance related pay reviews at 12, 18 and 24 months. As well as this you will have access to career development opportunities across sales and management.

### The Candidate

Our training sets the media industry's benchmark for quality; however, to be able to hit the ground running we are looking for someone who is:

- Enthusiastic, inquisitive & hungry to succeed
- A natural conversationalist with exceptional listening skills
- Able to build on going and lasting working relationships
- Somebody that enjoys working within a fast-paced environment
- Proficient in the use of Word, Excel & PowerPoint

### Other Information You Will Need to Know

Our motorsport division is based in the Richmond Borough, please be aware of this when applying for roles with us. We offer a competitive starting salary plus commission, while those successful candidates who prove themselves will find many opportunities for development and promotion to regularly increase this salary. We offer a generous 25 days per year holiday entitlement, which increases year on year by 1 day (to a max of 30).

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United Autosports have vacancies in the following positions to enhance our expanding motorsport operations



United Autosports is a race winning team and current European Le Mans Series Champions. We are also sole UK distributors for Ligier race cars and race car spares, and provide track support to our customers. Our expanding activities in motorsport require the following positions to be filled for motivated team players who are hard working, driven and can match our passion to win.

#### Race Engineer

- Experience in endurance racing - LMP1, LMP2, sportscars essential
- Proven success at Le Mans 24hr is preferred
- Experience of driver management, race strategy and proven data analysis skills
- Good communication, organisational and reporting skills essential

#### Number 1 and Number 2 Mechanics

- Experience in endurance racing - LMP1, LMP2 or high level single-seater preferred
- Good communication skills with both driver and team
- Ability to lead a team of mechanics effectively

#### Junior Mechanics

- Previous motorsport mechanical experience from education or work placement is a must
- Ambition to become a successful race mechanic and part of a winning team

#### Data and System Engineers

- Experience working with race car data analysis systems is essential
- In depth knowledge of the safe operating parameters of race cars
- Magneti Marelli and Cosworth experience is preferred
- Experience setting up and maintaining reliable pit to car radio communication systems
- Excellent organisational skills required, along with the ability to implement effective and efficient systems

#### Motorsport class 1 HGV drivers

- Experience in endurance racing including tyre management, garage set up and pitstops is essential
- Ability to work to a high level of presentation at all times
- Experience of driving articulated race trucks in Europe

#### Stores Manager / Buyer

- Previous experience of working with vehicle components, along with the ability to source suppliers
- Must be capable of implementing an efficient system for the stocking and re-ordering of components and consumables

#### Sub Assembly Mechanic

- Previous experience of working with LMP cars or single-seaters
- Must have experience of rebuilding and maintaining gearboxes and differentials to the highest of standards, including the life management of all components

Closing Date for all positions: Friday 25th November

To apply for these roles, please send your CV, references and remuneration expectations to [hr@unitedautosports.com](mailto:hr@unitedautosports.com)

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You'll work with colleagues in Aerodynamics, Manufacturing, Race Team, and external suppliers, to clarify requirements and to develop and refine your designs.

To fulfil this interesting position you will need:

- Relevant, composite design experience.
- To have experience in leading design projects.
- Good people skills.
- An organised and methodical approach to your work.
- Expertise in 3D CAD.

As well as being part of our multi Championship winning team, we reward our employees with a significant benefits package including Championship Bonus, Life Insurance, Private Medical Cover and a Contributory Pension Scheme.

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**CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS – 19<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2016**

PLEASE NOTE: No Agencies please.



# MOTORSPORT JOBS



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## SENIOR MECHANICAL DESIGN ENGINEER SW 1493

We are looking for a Senior Engineer to fill this unique position in our team. The successful candidate will be responsible for leading wishbone design and development along with a variety of other high level mechanical and composite design projects. The ideal candidate will have substantial and recent high level structural composite design experience in F1, and an excellent knowledge of composites components, science and tooling systems.

## CFD WEB DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER SW 1536

Responsible for the development of a web / database tool to allow engineers to easily interact with the large quantities of CFD data produced in the design cycles of a F1 car. The successful candidate will be degree-educated (engineering or mathematical) with proven competencies in web-development (Python, PHP, Django, MySQL, Javascript, HTML).

## ELECTRONICS DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER SW 1534

The successful candidate will be responsible for the design of on and off car electronics hardware including schematic capture and PCB layout. They will also be responsible for any embedded code required for these designs. Significant experience working in an electronic design role in a F1 team, a top level motorsport team, or for a F1 electronic system/ component supplier is essential.

## ELECTRONICS SUPPORT ENGINEER SW 1525

We have an exciting new opportunity to join our Trackside Electronics team as a Support Engineer. The successful candidate will be responsible for the preparation, configuration and calibration of the on-car electronic and control systems at the race and test events. The ideal candidate will be degree qualified and have a strong understanding of the F1 SECU system, as well as being flexible in their ability to travel with the team.

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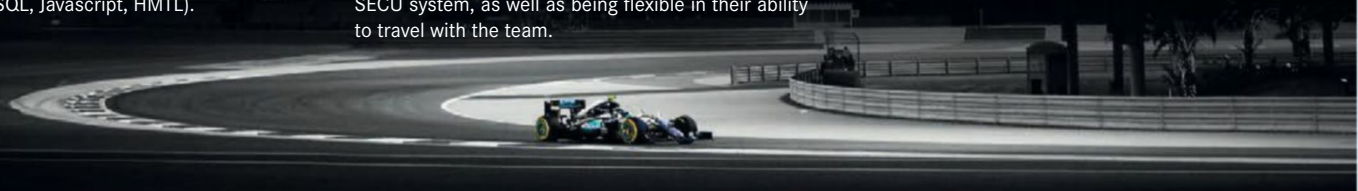
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Team Management / Logistics:

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RML will run at least one Ligier in 2017 Prototype Cup

## RML plots sportscar return in LMP3

LEADING BRITISH ENGINEERING FIRM RML will return to sportscar racing for the first time since 2014 with a dual campaign in LMP3 competition next year, which will include an entry in the inaugural Prototype Cup season.

The team is set to run a multi-car programme in the new Prototype Cup series – which held a pilot round at Snetterton last month – and has taken delivery of its first Ligier JSP3 chassis.

RML (Ray Mallock Limited) will also field Mectech Radical drivers Bradley Smith and Evgeny Klyucharev in the European Le Mans Series alongside its UK commitments.

The deal marks the first time RML has entered a traditional category of sportscar racing since 2011. The squad took Thomas Erdos and Mike Newton to ELMS LMP2 drivers' titles in 2007 and 2010. It has fielded works Le Mans programmes for Aston Martin, MG and more recently Nissan, when it developed the ZEOD Garage 56 entry in 2014. RML

also won four World Touring Car Championship drivers' titles with Chevrolet Cruzes between 2010 and 2013.

RML's commercial director Simon Holloway said: "We've been watching the growth of LMP3 closely in recent seasons and it's going through a real boom at the moment, and next year it will be even bigger.

"I've known Bradley [Smith] and the Mectech team since karting and this seemed like a perfect chance for us to go back to sportscars, as we have a proven car in the Ligier and two strong drivers.

"The Prototype Cup is also firmly in our plans as it's a great stepping stone. Drivers have to learn the skills needed in prototype racing, and the British series allows them to race with other cars without the stresses, pressures and budgets of the European championship.

"The two calendars don't clash, so the plan is to run the same cars in both series, and we've already got interest for a second car also."



Nissan's ZEOD Garage 56 Le Mans entry in 2014 was RML's most recent sportscar foray

Mectech head Mike Smith said: "RML's ambitions and our own fit perfectly for next year. We've won three Radical titles on the trot as a team, so LMP3 is the natural next step to expand into.

"It's great to work with RML as we'll pool resources and engineers, and it allows us to create a ladder for drivers and staff to progress to a very high level of sportscar racing and Le Mans."

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BRDC BRITISH F3

# US F4 champ Das close to F3 deal

**UNITED STATES FORMULA 4 CHAMPION** Cameron Das is in talks to contest the full BRDC British Formula 3 Championship with Carlin next year.

The 16-year-old from Brooklandville, Maryland won the inaugural Honda-powered US F4 title last month and joined Carlin for last weekend's Autumn Trophy at Snetterton as he assesses his options for 2017.

Das (pictured) finished seventh in the Autumn Trophy points with a best placing of fifth on his first visit to the Norfolk track.

"I'm in talks with teams, but I'm mainly focusing on trying to get a seat with Carlin," said Das, who took eight consecutive wins at

the end of the US F4 season.

"British F3 is a very good starting step as a platform towards European F3, and the strength of coaching and training in the UK is just so high that I'm very eager to ensure my next career step is in Europe.

"I've enjoyed my taste of the British F3 Championship – the car is a lot of fun and it's a big step up from an F4 car."

Autumn Trophy champion Enaam Ahmed is also chasing a return to the full championship next season, but the 16-year-old Englishman is unlikely to remain with Carlin, with which he contested the Trophy.

Ahmed won two of the three races to clinch

the title last weekend, securing a paid-up entry slot for the 2017 season as a reward for his success. But Ahmed, who finished fifth in the main 2016 championship with Douglas Motorsport, said his plans for next season are still up in the air.

"I raced with Carlin this weekend as a big sponsor came in and wanted me to race with them," Ahmed said. "I'm not actually sure where my future lies and I certainly haven't signed with anyone yet.

"Carlin kept me calm and collected this morning [Sunday], with the bad weather disrupting things. Winning the title is a huge boost for me in my 2017 aims."

BRITISH F4

# Caroline to stay in F4 despite Trophy outing

**BRITISH FORMULA 4 RACE** winner Jamie Caroline is set to stay in the category for a second year, despite making his BRDC British F3 debut in the Autumn Trophy at Snetterton.

The 17-year-old took a best result of third last weekend driving for Douglas Motorsport, but says he will remain in F4 in 2017 and join either Carlin or Double R.

Caroline finished 10th in F4 in 2016 after a switch from Jamun to Fortec mid-season, and claimed a first win at the final

round at Brands Hatch.

"I'm not looking at F3 in the short term, but it's something to think about for 2018," he said. "I'm going to race in F4 again."

Meanwhile, Billy Monger has confirmed that he will stay in F4 with JHR next year. It will be his third year with the team, having first raced in the 2015 Ginetta Junior series. "The target for 2017 has to be race wins," he said. "If we can achieve that, there's no reason why we can't challenge for the title."



MACAU TCR

# Files secures late TCR Macau entry

**TCR GERMANY CHAMPION JOSH FILES** HAS secured a late deal to take part in the TCR International Macau Guia round this month.

The 25-year-old will drive the same Target Competition Honda Civic with which he won the German title, and will make his second appearance in the event, which forms part of the Macau Grand Prix bill.

Last year Files raced in an uncompetitive Opel Astra, but is confident of better results this time.

"I'm going with Target Competition in a Honda, so I'm going with my championship-winning car and I'm going to fight for wins," said the 2013 Renault UK Clio Cup champion.

Honda WTCC star Tiago Monteiro is also racing a Civic TCR in the streets of Macau. The Portuguese, who has some TCR experience, will line up with West Coast Racing.





**SSANGYONG CHALLENGE** A SsangYong Korando made a brief appearance at Brands Hatch last Saturday. The pickup truck – which will be raced in the one-make SsangYong Racing Challenge that is scheduled to launch in 2017 – was entered in the Allcomers event, but driver Ash Slight lost control at Paddock Hill Bend on his first qualifying lap and the Korando finished on its side in the gravel trap. **Photograph by Gary Hill**

## IN BRIEF



**BRADSHAW WINS HENRY SURTEES RACE**  
Callum Bradshaw won the seventh annual Henry Surtees Challenge event at Buckmore Park last week. He beat drivers such as Euro F3 man Ben Barnicoat, GP3 driver Jake Dennis and Ginetta Junior champion Will Tregurtha, and was presented with the winner's trophy by 1964 F1 world champion John Surtees. All proceeds from the event went to the Henry Surtees Foundation.

**SMALLEY WINS JUNIOR SCHOLARSHIP**  
Adam Smalley has secured a fully funded season in Ginetta Juniors next year after winning the Junior Scholarship. The 15-year-old took part in driving, media and fitness assessments in a three-day shootout at Blyton Park, and emerged on top after making it through to the final with Matt Luff and Toby Goodman.

**BILL HENDERSON 1924-2016**  
Bill Henderson was, until his death last week at the age of 92, Autosport's oldest living contributor. A Falkirk schoolmaster during the week, he spent his weekends at circuits such as Charterhall and hillclimbs such as Bo'ness, taking photographs and writing meticulous reports from shortly after the magazine's launch in 1950, which were packaged and on the train to London by midnight. He attended races and took photos into his nineties, and an archive is now run by his son William.

**MORRIS WINS RACE FOR DAYTONA**  
British GT frontrunner Seb Morris will race in the Prototype class of next year's Daytona 24 Hours after winning the Sunoco Whelen Challenge. The Sunoco contest scores drivers with a points average dependent upon their results across the season.

**HOLLAMBY'S SHORT-LIVED RETURN**  
British Touring Car Championship team boss Shaun Hollamby returned to driving duties for a guest appearance in the Volkswagen Racing Cup at Brands Hatch. After a strong Friday, his race only lasted a few seconds as he was an innocent party in a multi-car first-lap shunt, rolling at the foot of Paddock (below).



### VWRACING CUP

## New TTs to race in Volkswagen Cup

TWO NEW-GENERATION AUDI TTs will be campaigned in the Volkswagen Racing Cup for the first time next year.

Simon Walton, who competes in the Cooper Class of the Mini Challenge, has bought two brand-new two-litre TFSi TTs that he and son Owen will race in the 2017 championship.

The cars were delivered last month and have already been tested at Croft. They have since been sent to VW specialist Slidesports to be built into race cars for next year.

Walton Sr said: "We've got special dispensation to run the TTs in the VW Cup as they're the new model so it works for the series and for Audi.

"Nobody has built and raced a new TT in this country, so it's a good challenge to be doing the first development with things like the rollcage, brakes and such.

"The cars are front-wheel drive, 230bhp and great fun, and should easily be competitive against the usual Golfs and Sciroccos."



### RADICAL MASTERS

## Hoy and Kenny on Radical podium

MULTIPLE GOLD MEDAL-WINNING Olympians Sir Chris Hoy and Jason Kenny were reunited as a team for the first time since the 2012 Olympics when the two cycling legends shared a Radical RXC Spyder in the final Radical European Masters round at Jerez last weekend.

The duo finished third in class in the first two races and were fourth in the finale.

They teamed up at Jerez after Radical contacted them both before this summer's

Rio Olympics. "Radical got in touch before the Olympics and said that if Jason got a gold medal in Rio, it would be good to put us in a car together," said Hoy, who started racing in Radicals after retiring from cycling, and has since competed in British GT, the European Le Mans Series and the Le Mans 24 Hours.

Kenny, who won three golds in Rio, added: "I was so made up to be on the podium and loved the driver change and teamwork, so vowed to have another go some time."



Carroll struggled at FF Festival but returns to WHT as defending winner

EBREY

FF1600

# Carroll's new engine for WHT

SCOTTISH FORMULA FORD ACE GRAHAM CARROLL is hoping that a new engine supplier will help him to take a second successive Walter Hayes Trophy victory in this weekend's Formula Ford 1600 event at Silverstone.

Carroll returned to the Trophy last year after a lengthy spell away, and took honours in a brand-new Medina Sport Van Diemen run by BM Racing.

This year the Scot has helped with the development of Ralph Firman's new RF1600, but has experienced a trying teething period. This included a frustrating performance in the Formula Ford Festival at Brands Hatch, while team-mate Luke Williams ran strongly.

Carroll cited engine problems as the main influence behind his Festival showing, but has now enlisted the help of Steven Paton, whose powerplants helped Carroll to the 2008 national FF1600 title.

"It should definitely be better than Brands," he said.

"We've got a new engine, and have gone back to a guy in Ireland. I think the engine Ralph uses is from a new guy on the block, and these guys have been doing it for years.

"The car was good at Brands, but when I put my foot down I could just feel people driving away from me."

● 2014 winner Wayne Boyd will return to the Walter Hayes Trophy having missed the event last year, and will race a Medina Sport JL16D. Other significant entries include National champion and Festival winner Niall Murray, James Raven, Michael Moyers, Joey Foster and Festival contender Oliver Askew. The minimum weight of cars has also been upped for this year. The event used to enforce a 420kg car-only minimum, but has increased that to 500kg for 2016 - which includes the weight of the driver - with the new requirements falling into line with the BRSCC's regulations for its FF1600 championships.

STOCKHATCH

## HATCH ACE HAMMOND TRIES SEAT EURO CAR

CLASSIC STOCK HATCH regular Pip Hammond swapped his Vauxhall Nova for a SEAT Leon Eurocup car in a test at Silverstone last week.

Hammond tested the car, which has been built to TCR regulations, at the Northamptonshire circuit last Monday with the Zest Racecar Engineering squad.

"Everything I've raced has been production-based with standard suspension and treaded tyres," he said. "To get into a car with three times more power, sitting on the other side with a paddle shift, all the grip of the slick tyres and then massive brakes with no servo assist, was an eye-opener."

Hammond, who took the 2011 Classic Stock Hatch title and won two races in a bitpart campaign in the 750 Motor Club series this year, is in line to race the car at select Touring Car Endurance Series (TCES) rounds in 2017.

CREVENTIC 24 HOUR SERIES

# Excelr8 develops JCW for Endurance campaign

MINI CHALLENGE SQUAD Excelr8 will expand into the Creventic 24 Hour Series next year with a bespoke endurance John Cooper Works machine.

The new car is based upon the standard F56 JCW Challenge car, but with heavy modification to adapt the car to long-distance racing. It features the same turbocharged two-litre BMW engine as in the Challenge cars, but has been boosted from 255 to 345bhp with forged internals, a gas-flowed head, Garrett turbo and custom manifold.

The car will go through an intensive testing programme over the winter ahead of a full

campaign in the pan-European Creventic class next year.

Excelr8's Oliver Shepherd said: "We wanted to make the most extreme version of the JCW, and where better to prove it than endurance racing?"

"We had to think about where the ultimate performance was and then dial it back to ensure it lasted. The engine is actually capable of 390bhp, but we're running lower for longevity as endurance racing is half about speed and half about reliability.

"The Creventic series is fantastic, and it's a great platform to show what the current Mini is capable of and what Excelr8 can produce."



Excelr8 JCW Mini will produce up to 345bhp



# Algarve Classic Fest a hidden Historics gem

By Marcus Pye, the voice of club racing

[@Autosport](#)

## POPULAR WITH COMPETITORS, PORTUGAL'S

Algarve Classic Festival has been a relaxed and sociable season-closer for eight years, a must-do for many.

With complimentary hotel rooms for entrants, great restaurants (not just in town; my favourite Solar do Farelo is a hidden gem in a village 10 minutes away, although, sadly, I didn't get there this time) and world class golf courses nearby, it's a wonder more don't make a holiday of it. This year's heatwave (towards 30C) was perfect for onlookers, too!

Hewn into the hills inland from Portimao, on the Atlantic Ocean, the Autodromo International Algarve's 2.9-mile switchback layout is inspired, very difficult to master and has some sensational corners. The final cambered downhill sweeper is awesome. I'd worked at the venue several times yet not been round, which circuit boss Paulo Pinheiro sorted. His lap in a 400bhp Audi RS3 had the savagely accelerative Ingolstadt rocket's front brakes red hot. Utterly terrifying, it heightened my respect for the skill of the weekend's top guns.

Being consistently quick on such a course in anything (Autobianchi to Cosworth DFV-engined Lola T282 competed last weekend, while a downforce-laden V10 Judd-powered Dallara SP1 sports-prototype headed the '90s Endurance demos) demands finesse, commitment and huge mental acuity. Miles Griffiths' winning final stint in the Motor Racing Legends '50s Sportscar race demonstrated this, his 24 successive flying laps blanketed by barely two seconds. In a Lotus 15 on narrow treaded tyres, hunting down star driver Greg Caton in a similar car, through constant traffic, under cover of darkness. Extraordinary.

This year's ACF was lighter on big international classes (no FIA Lurani Trophy Formula Junior or CER) but MRL's RAC Woodcote Trophy/Stirling Moss Trophy mix and Flavien and

Vanessa Marciais' GT & Sports Car Cup provided wonderful racing and a great sense of camaraderie. The inaugural Algarve 200km Pre-'79 retrospective was thin and hit by attrition, but can grow. Diogo Ferrao – whose Iberian Historic Endurance series is now well established – may tweak the eligibility to achieve this, having signed a fresh three-year ACF contract with AIA.

Numerous national fields brought chirruping Ford Sierra RS500s, screaming Escorts and BMWs (Herculano Antas's E36 M3 sounded fantastic) and a host of Porsches to the fray, in addition to competitive groups of Alfa Romeo 156s, Citroen Saxo VTRs and Fiat Puntos. The Single-Seater competition, fronted by Formula Ford Zetecs, is keenly fought, too, by some excellent young drivers.

Mention must be made of the returning Lotus Seven 60th Anniversary Series/Super 7 races – an Anglo-Portuguese Caterham promotion orchestrated by Briton Andy McMillan, who prepares a fleet of cars in two-litre R300 and 1600cc Sigmax specs in England, and his local equivalent.

The drivers were on it in typical marque fashion and, with their cars being re-prepared in the interim, will fly down to rejoin them for their seasonal finale at Estoril, near Lisbon, in three weeks' time.

My own historic and club-themed working season is now done, another 30-event odyssey that began in Australia with the VHRR's Classic event at the superlative Phillip Island circuit in March and took me to Zandvoort and Spa, in addition to most circuits in England, plus the Chateau Impney hillclimb.

The 2017 calendar is filling up already, with a long-awaited return to New Zealand for Hampton Downs and Taupo in January set to kick it off. 🍷

➔ **P72** ALGARVE CLASSIC FESTIVAL REPORT



## KUBOTA'S MEXICAN WAVE IN TEAM LOTUS 78

Masters USA-flagged Historic F1 races supported the Mexican GP for the second successive year last weekend, with Japan's Katsu Kubota winning both legs at the wheel of his Classic Team Lotus-run 78. Britons Aaron Scott (March 761) and Greg Thornton (Lotus 77) finished second and third in the races. Switzerland's Jean-Denis Delétraz, who started three GPs for Larrousse and Pacific in 1994-95, finished fourth in the opener in a Surtees TS19.



## NO RAIN ON THIRD-PLACE PRIMROSE OR T290 IN ALGARVE

A week after he contested the 750MC's Birkett Six Hour Team Relay race at Silverstone in a Radical SR3, Scot Neil Primrose's passion for sports-prototypes continued at Portugal's Algarve Classic Festival. The Travis drummer drove Richard Tovey's Newbridge Racing Lola-BDG T290 to third in Saturday's Algarve 200km opening leg, but a cracked bellhousing precluded a start on Sunday. Fellow T290 pilot Mark Richardson borrowed the fire extinguisher as his discharged in race one.

**SNETTERTON**

MSVR BRDC F3 OCTOBER 29-30

# Ahmed prevails in shortened Autumn Trophy

EVER-ENCROACHING FOG MEANT Enaam Ahmed took the BRDC British Formula 3 Autumn Trophy crown one race early as the adverse weather meant the finale was cancelled.

Ahmed, who switched from Douglas Motorsport to Carlin for the event, won two of the races, with Double R Racing-run Dan Ticktum taking the other.

With visibility making even the safety car impossible to spot just hours before, Ahmed made a superb start from pole in what turned out to be the last race to retain the lead ahead of Ticktum.

Ticktum, who was making his UK motorsport return following his 12-month sinbanning from the Motor Sports Association, entered the finale just five points adrift in the standings.

Knowing how difficult it is to pass on the Snetterton 300 in perfect conditions, let alone a deep fog, Ticktum tried an early move at the hairpin.

But that attempt ended with the two touching, Ticktum ending up on the grass in retirement, and blaming rival Ahmed for the collision.

"I went for a move and he moved very, very late in the braking zone and closed the door," he said. "It was too late for me; I'd committed to the move, so I was onto the grass where there's no grip at all."

"I'll be taking it to the clerk of the course as it was just bad driving. Something has to be done about it."

Any such appeal fell on deaf ears, with Ahmed adding: "It was a tricky race and it was very dangerous out there. I went off on the first lap earlier and then me and Dan collided at the hairpin."

"I didn't see him; I didn't know it was him. The visibility was bad – you couldn't see down the straights and I was caught out in braking zones as well."

With Ticktum out of the race, it was



fellow title contender and reigning German Formula 4 champion Joey Mawson looming in Ahmed's mirrors as the safety car circulated – required after Ben Hingeley and James Pull collided.

When the race went green, any chance of a battle ended when Mawson misjudged his braking and locked his Douglas Motorsport car up at Riches.

Mawson responded with a fastest lap to take race-four pole. He was only 17 points adrift of Ahmed, but the worsening fog ended any hopes of a championship showdown.

"I was so glad there wasn't another race," said champion Ahmed. "It was so scary out there. It's been two nailbiting days but it's so special, especially against racers like Callan [O'Keeffe], Marcus [Armstrong], Mawson and Ticktum."

That quartet were right up there with Ahmed from the get-go on Saturday, as the weekend started with the top 10 split by just over half a second in qualifying.

Ahmed's pole lap, which was just 0.053 seconds faster than Ticktum's effort, proved to be crucial with overtaking opportunities at a premium.

From the grid Ahmed grasped his chance, making a lightning start as fellow

**Exemplary Ahmed led from front in R1 on his way to Autumn Trophy title success**

front-row starter Ticktum made an error and lost second to Mawson.

"I held the clutch too long and I bogged down; I've not raced from the grid in a while," said Ticktum.

Mawson followed Ahmed closely but the distance between the two was too much, while Ticktum trailed in third. The Brit wasn't too disappointed, though, as the free air meant he was able to set a laptime good enough for race-two pole.

Having used four new tyres for the first race, Ticktum managed his older set superbly to ensure he won the second encounter and kept pressure on Ahmed.

From pole, Ticktum nailed his second attempt at a front-row start, as Mawson took his turn to make a poor getaway, with Ahmed jumping him for second.

Ticktum estimated his tyres would cost him around a tenth a lap to his rivals, but he was helped by Mawson battling with Ahmed and raced clear to win.

"The start was definitely on my mind," said Ticktum. "I was too concerned with others in the first race; this time I focused on myself and went for it."

"If you get a good start it's very hard to be passed. Everyone behind is in dirty air and by the time you reach the hairpin you've broken the tow, so it then becomes about not making mistakes."

In the end the fine margins of the finale decided the title, with Ticktum's failed move on Ahmed ensuring the Carlin driver seized the crown ahead of Mawson. The consistent O'Keeffe was third, pipping Ticktum to the spot.

Mawson was the only man who ever looked likely to challenge for the crown besides Ticktum, but he finished behind the title winner in each race.

"I had more pace than Ahmed at times," said Mawson. "He just kept on finishing ahead of me!"

**TOM ERRINGTON**



**Ahmed clashed with Trophy contender Ticktum in R3 fog**

ALL PICS: STYLES

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## RESULTS

### BRDC BRITISH F3 AUTUMN TROPHY (12 LAPS)

**1** Enaam Ahmed; 2 Joey Mawson +1.627s; 3 Daniel Ticktum; 4 Callan O'Keeffe; 5 James Pull; 6 Tarun Reddy.

**Fastest lap** Ticktum 1m44.066s (102.70mph). **Pole** Ahmed. **Starters** 12.

**RACE 2 (12 LAPS)** **1** Ticktum; 2 Ahmed +3.868s; 3 Mawson; 4 Marcus Armstrong; 5 Reddy; 6 O'Keeffe. **FL** Armstrong 1m44.251s (102.52mph). **P** Ticktum. **S** 12.

**RACE 3 (8 LAPS)** **1** Ahmed; 2 Mawson +0.403s; 3 Jamie Caroline; 4 O'Keeffe; 5 Cameron Das; 6 Sasakorn Chaimongkol. **FL** Mawson 1m44.286s (102.48mph).

**P** Ahmed. **S** 12. **POINTS** **1** Ahmed 99; 2 Mawson 82; 3 O'Keeffe 61; 4 Ticktum 59; 5 Caroline 52; 6 Reddy 51.

**MINI CHALLENGE JCW (10 LAPS)** **1** David Grady; 2 Nathan Harrison +3.710s;

3 Charlie Butler-Henderson; 4 Brett Smith; 5 Jono Brown; 6 Sam Osborne. **FL** Grady 2m07.240s (83.99mph). **P** Luke Caudle.

**S** 27. **RACE 2 (5 LAPS)** **1** Grady; 2 Harrison +0.523s; 3 Butler-Henderson; 4 Smith; 5 Henry Neal; 6 Brown. **FL** Harrison 2m08.188s (83.37mph). **S** 27.

**MINI CHALLENGE COOPER/COOPER S/ OPEN (9 LAPS)** **1** Scott Jeffs; 2 Tim Porter +4.192s; 3 Rob Austin; 4 Jonathan Davis; 5 Scot Adam; 6 Keith Issatt. **Class winners** Davis; Tim Bill; Max Bladon; Will Foulkes. **FL** Jeffs 2m12.065s (80.93mph).

**P** Carlito Miracco. **S** 28. **RACE 2 (6 LAPS)**

**1** Jeffs; 2 Adam +1.788s; 3 Porter; 4 Davis; 5 Issatt; 6 Richard Mills. **CW** Davis; Taelor Shand; Bladon; Foulkes. **FL** Adam 2m12.405s (80.72mph). **P** Jeffs. **S** 28.

**LOTUS CUP (28 LAPS)** **1** Jason Baker (Elise); 2 Adam MacKay (Exige V6) +0.895s; 3 Adam Balon (Exige V6); 4 Ryan Savage (2-Eleven); 5 Andrew Wright (Exige); 6 Rob Myers (Exige V6).

**CW** MacKay; James Little (Elise Cup R). **FL** Baker 2m01.618s (87.88mph).

**P** Baker. **S** 19.

**LOTUS ELISE TROPHY (10 LAPS)**

**1** James Little; 2 Jason Baker +4.498s; 3 Alex Ball; 4 William Stacey; 5 Seth Walpole; 6 Jason McNulty. **FL** Stacey 2m10.883s (81.66mph). **P** Ball. **S** 18. **RACE**

**2 (9 LAPS)** **1** Baker; 2 Stacey +0.182s; 3 Little; 4 Ball; 5 David Alexander; 6 Stuart Ratcliff. **FL** Stacey 2m11.251s (81.43mph).

**P** Mark Richardson. **S** 17.

**TRACK ATTACK AUTUMN TROPHY**

**(7 LAPS)** **1** Philip Collard (Mazda RX7); 2 Tony Hunter (Renault Clio) +17.083s; 3 Sonny Hardy (Renault Clio); 4 Nick Gwinnett (Renault Clio); 5 Steve Cassar (Honda Integra); 6 Paul Buckmaster (Mazda RX7). **CW** Hunter; Andy McLennan (Suzuki Swift); Johnny Hamui (Nissan 370Z); Carl Powell (Toyota MR2); Jason Jesse (VW Bora). **FL** Lee Gillard (Subaru Impreza) 2m14.970s (79.18mph).

**P** Ryan Mone (Porsche 944). **S** 30.

# Foggy ending cannot deny Grady JCW title success

TWO RACES DECIDED THE destination of the Mini Challenge JCW title at Snetterton, with foggy weather forcing the cancellation of the third event while the second ran mainly under safety-car conditions.

Coping with all that could be thrown at him, David Grady claimed the title he was unlucky not to secure last year at the same venue.

"Unbelievable; it's the biggest achievement in my 20 years of racing," said an overwhelmed Grady. "I did the hard work yesterday in qualifying and winning the race."

Poleman Luke Caudle led the opening race away but was followed by Grady, who was gifted first place when Caudle outbraked himself at Riches and hit the safety barrier on lap three. Title challenger Nathan Harrison followed in second while Charlie Butler-Henderson, who held a massive slide at Riches, was promoted to third after Luke Reade's track-limits penalty.

The season's concluding race was an anti-climax with three laps run behind the safety car resulting in only two competitive tours. Still, Grady had to hold off a rampant Harrison – who plans to graduate to the BTCC next year – when the field was initially released after a safety-car start. A restart following a second caution gave Grady a bigger margin, which he maintained to the flag for a second win.

Butler-Henderson was a cautious third and was forced to hold off the eager Brett Smith as he handed over his title to Grady. "David is a worthy champion and pushed me hard last year, but I'll be back next year," said CB-H.

Carlito Miracco took an early lead in the multi-class Mini Challenge race but faded with turbo-boost issues, handing victory to Scott Jeffs. Tim

Potter got the better of Rob Austin for second, while Jonathan Davis was a class-winning fourth.

Racing resumed in the gloom on Sunday with Jeffs going unchallenged to wrap up the Cooper S title, while Scot Adam made progress to finish second ahead of Tim Potter. Davis won the Open class again, and Max Bladon's 14th win of the season in the Cooper section confirmed his superiority.

The destination of the Lotus Cup came down to a head-to-head battle between Ryan Savage and Adam Mackay, the Scottish teenager having the edge over his rival all day to secure the honours. Jason Baker cruised to victory while Savage suffered a drive-through penalty to blunt his challenge.

Alex Ball claimed the Lotus Elise Trophy title in dramatic fashion despite fading with a slipping clutch. The champion-elect led comfortably but as problems set in he was powerless to fend off James Little on the final lap at Agostini, while Jason Baker also powered his way past on the run to the finish line.

Baker completed the season with a narrow victory over William Stacey, having taken the lead from Jason McNulty at Wilson after setting up a pass at the previous corner.

Fast-starting Lee Gillard led the early laps of the Track Attack Autumn Trophy until his Subaru Impreza's engine went sick, allowing Philip Collard to stroll to the chequered flag in his Mazda RX7. Paul Buckmaster found a series of nippy front-wheel-drive cars too difficult to keep behind his flame-spitting RX7, with Tony Hunter (Renault Clio) the first to demote him. Sonny Hardy, in another Clio, also made it through.

**LEWIS BEALES**



Little chased Ball, and would go on to win Elise Trophy R1



Grady's second win came in fog and confirmed JCW title

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**BRANDSHATCH**  
MSVR OCTOBER 29-30

## Full House for VW champion

A DECISIVE WIN IN THE LAST RACE of the season secured Philip House the Volkswagen Racing Cup crown after a tense triple-header that featured four drivers with a chance of taking the title.

Two were effectively ruled out in race one. Trouble started when poleman Jamie Bond was nudged sideways at Paddock Hill Bend. Three cars then got together at the foot of the hill and guest driver Shaun Hollamby was pitched into a roll. Potential champion Bobby Thompson was also involved, and fellow contender Kenan Dole's car was pushed off the reformed grid with a fuel pump problem.

Bond won the rerun with House second, two places ahead of surviving title rival Tom Witts. The top five were reversed on the race two grid, and Witts took full advantage, beating Darelle Wilson to the flag, with House sixth.

The decider went comfortably to House after Bond retired with a sudden loss of power. This was despite a broken clutch that limited the new champion to fourth gear from lap two. Witts spent too long behind Simon Rudd and could not catch House once he reached second.

The ninth Vee Festival featured three races but had an entry well short of a full grid. Despite this there was some excellent on-track action. John Hughes missed qualifying but dashed from last to fourth in his Scarab before a stoppage when podium contenders Ian Jordan and Ian Buxton were involved in a Paddock Hill incident. Hughes headed Craig Pollard before the rerun was flagged off with two laps completed after a car beached at Clark Curve.

Martin Farmer won race two on the road but was demoted to fourth by a track limits penalty. This promoted Peter Belsey to first, with Pollard and Hughes (up from 10th on a reversed grid) next.

Pollard led the first lap of the finale and closed up in traffic, but Hughes ended his limited 2016 season with a narrow victory. Belsey was a distant third, with

Ben Miloudi and Farmer next. Stephen Morrin completed the top six and earned an award as the leading Irish finisher.

Chris Enderby's Radical dominated Saturday's Allcomers races. Peter White's SR3 took second twice, even though he lost more than half a minute on one lap in race two when all his gears went temporarily missing.

Kevin Otway wasted his qualifying advantage with a lap one spin in the first Mono Open race. A caution period helped him close up again to finish fourth, while Chris Kite's Dallara swooped past Mark Reade (Leystone) for the win. Kite's terrible start in race two dropped him to seventh, but he picked off those ahead for a second success.

Race victories in the ever-popular Victor Meldrew Trophy were earned by Karl Graves (BMW 120d) and Lewis Turner (Citroen Saxo), but the profound mysteries of the Meldrew handicapping process meant the coveted trophy was once again handed to 2014 winner Jody Halse. His BMW was classified fourth and seventh in the races.

Sunday's Allcomers wins were shared by Nick Starkey and Anthony Bennett (Caterhams). Starkey's success came under pressure from Ian McDonald's Radical SR1, with Bennett third after cooking his tyres. Bennett made a better job of it in race two, winning by a whisker over McDonald, while Starkey was third.

**BRIAN PHILLIPS**



Hughes stormed to Vee Festival win in his Scarab

House held out to win VW Cup finale, sealing 2016 crown in the process

### RESULTS

#### VOLKSWAGEN RACING CUP (12 LAPS)

**1 Jamie Bond (Golf);** 2 Phil House (Scirocco) +4.062s; 3 Simon Rudd (Golf); 4 Tom Witts (Golf); 5 Kieran Gordon (Golf); 6 Mark Smith (Scirocco). **Fastest lap** Bond 52.224s (83.26mph). **Pole** Bond. **Starters** 11.

**RACE 2 (21 LAPS) 1 Witts;** 2 Darelle Wilson (Scirocco) +1.233s; 3 Rudd; 4 Gordon; 5 Toby Davis (Golf); 6 House. **FL** Wilson 52.468s (82.88mph). **P** Gordon. **S** 14.

**RACE 3 (21 LAPS) 1 House;** 2 Witts +3.619s; 3 Davis; 4 Gordon; 5 Kenan Dole (Golf); 6 Rudd. **FL** Gordon 52.546s (82.75mph). **P** Bond. **S** 14.

#### VEE FESTIVAL (2 LAPS) 1 John Hughes (Scarab

**Mk5);** 2 Craig Pollard (Bears GAC) +0.335s;

3 Ben Miloudi (Storm); 4 Tim Probert (Storm);

5 Peter Belsey (Spyder Mk2); 6 Martin Farmer (GAC).

**FL** Hughes 53.552s (81.20mph). **P** Pollard. **S** 17.

**RACE 2 (17 LAPS) 1 Belsey;** 2 Pollard +0.751s;

3 Hughes; 4 Farmer; 5 Miloudi; 6 Probert. **FL** Hughes

52.822s (82.32mph). **P** James Cater (RTV Sheane). **S** 16.

**FINAL (17 LAPS) 1 Hughes;** 2 Pollard +0.203s;

3 Belsey; 4 Miloudi; 5 Farmer; 6 Stephen Morrin

(Leystone JH004). **FL** Pollard 52.919s (82.17mph).

**P** Hughes. **S** 16.

#### MSVR ALLCOMERS (24 LAPS) 1 Chris Enderby

**(Radical SR4);** 2 Peter White (Radical SR3) +4.946s;

3 Mark Rider (Caterham); 4 Tim Davis (Caterham C400);

5 Nick Starkey (Caterham); 6 Hugh Coulter (Caterham

C400). **FL** White 47.929s (90.73mph). **P** Enderby. **S** 29.

**RACE 2 (25 LAPS) 1 Enderby;** 2 White +42.801s;

3 Rider; 4 Davis; 5 Starkey; 6 Coulter. **FL** White 48.264s

(90.10mph). **P** Enderby. **S** 25.

#### MONO OPEN (16 LAPS) 1 Chris Kite (Dallara 393);

2 Mark Reade (Leystone 1000) +1.838s; 3 Chris Lord

(Vauxhall Lotus); 4 Kevin Otway (Van Diemen); 5 Joe

Power (Leystone 1000); 6 George Fowler (Reynard

SF84). **FL** Kite 48.170s (90.27mph). **P** Otway. **S** 10.

**RACE 2 (18 LAPS) 1 Kite;** 2 Otway +1.151s; 3 Lord;

4 Kevin Couling (Tatuus); 5 David Jones (DSE PR3);

6 Fowler. **FL** Kite 48.306s (90.02mph). **P** Otway. **S** 10.

#### VICTOR MELDREW TROPHY (BOTH 15 LAPS)

**1 Karl Graves (BMW 120d);** 2 Tony Halls (Toyota MR2)

+1.484s; 3 Terry Searles (MG ZR190); 4 Jody Halse

(BMW M3); 5 Lewis Turner (Citroen Saxo); 6 Len Colley

(BMW 325). **FL** Barnaby Davies (Toyota Starlet) 53.903s

(80.67mph). **P** Don Hughes (Peugeot 306). **S** 30.

**RACE 2 1 Turner;** 2 Mark Thomas (Ford Anglia)

+0.499s; 3 Chris Webster (Mazda MX5); 4 Halls;

5 Colley; 6 Chad Donner (Ford Escort). **FL** Halse

54.897s (79.21mph). **P** Hughes. **S** 28.

#### MSVR ALLCOMERS (23 LAPS) 1 Nick Starkey

**(Caterham);** 2 Ian McDonald (Radical SR1) +0.351s;

3 Anthony Bennett (Caterham CSR); 4 Andy Thompson

(SEAT Toledo); 5 Tom Brenton (Ford Sierra XR8); 6 Bob

Hosier (SEAT Leon). **FL** McDonald 51.252s (84.84mph).

**P** Bennett. **S** 11. **RACE 2 (21 LAPS) 1 Bennett;**

2 McDonald +0.586s; 3 Starkey; 4 Chris Everill

(Ginetta G50); 5 Thompson; 6 JJ Ross (Renault Clio).

**FL** McDonald 51.511s (84.42mph). **P** Starkey. **S** 11.



Turner (51) and Graves were Meldrew on-the-road winners

ALL PICS: HAWKINS





ALGARVE

HEE OCTOBER 28-30

# Griffiths pips Caton in cliffhanger

LAST SATURDAY EVENING'S riveting Motor Racing Legends '50s sportscar enduro – in which Miles Griffiths (in Philip Walker's Lotus 15) denied virtuoso soloist Greg Caton a debut victory – took some beating, yet Sunday's sensational GT & Sports Car Cup 10th season finale arguably trumped it at the eighth Algarve Classic Festival.

Griffiths and Caton had duelled for pole on Friday, Griffiths's 2m08.554s shot prevailing over Caton in the Dragon Racing 15. A sticking throttle interrupted Caton's final charge, but he bolted clear on race day and led for almost two hours.

Walker double-stinted and served a drivethrough for exceeding the rigidly enforced 60km/h (37mph) pitlane speed limit before installing Griffiths. Miles set about eroding a 30-second deficit with relish and swept past Caton on lap 49 of 53. Caton's Climax engine would not pick up the last few litres of fuel, precluding a response.

The struggle for third was equally gripping. Despite a late drivethrough (co-driver Max Girardo having tripped the pit-speed-limit trigger), James Cottingham had the Ecurie Ecosse Tojeiro-Jaguar flying. He narrowly failed to usurp Gary Pearson, finishing Carlos Monteverde's barely run-in (new-build) Lister-Jaguar Costin.

Charlie Gillett/Steve Smith enjoyed a splendid run to fifth in the beffined Willment-Climax, ahead of the ex-Jim Clark Lister-Jaguar of Steve Boultee Brooks/Andrew Smith, running hot in the later stages. The early star was Ben Mitchell – drafted in to the Kremer family's giant-slaying Lotus 17 after

their 15 was sidelined in practice – who shot through to second. Headlight failure blunted the effort.

Polesitter Julian Thomas was running away with the GT&SCC race at one-third distance when his Jaguar E-type shed a rear wheel and came to rest atop it. This promoted the tussle between John Young (JD Classics E-type) and Pedro Macedo Silva (AC Cobra) to lead status, and cued a safety car at the perfect juncture for the first of two mandatory stops.

Despite incurring a minute's penalty at each because car owner Derek Hood withdrew, Chris Ward drove a brilliant centre stanza in the green JD Jag to lead at mid-race as the open Portuguese Cobra faded with Macedo Silva Sr up. Gary Pearson was now Ward's closest rival in Carlos Monteverde's ex-Ford France Cobra, which the Brazilian had spun, but Ward relayed Young into the lead on fresh tyres with 25 minutes to go.

"It had no brakes [glazed pads] for two laps," grinned Young, "but I got them back in and it was OK again." The man on a mission, though, was Chris Chiles Jr, who, having punctured his Cobra's rear tyre against a Healey's wheel

**Griffiths and Walker (leading) defeated the similar Lotus 15 of Caton in a thriller**

spinner while lying second on lap 11, had watched father Chris growl it back into contention. Junior leapt back in with 45 minutes remaining, charged past Monteverde and slashed Young's 24s advantage in nine scintillating laps.

Four seconds behind onto the final lap, Chiles finished in Young's slipstream as both protagonists earned a rousing reception from the pitwall. "I'd been watching the signals and could see the Cobra coming, but thought we had just enough in hand," said Young. "When the engine coughed in the last couple of corners I was worried, but we got there!"

The Cobras of Monteverde and Macedo Silva finished third and fourth ahead of American Fred Wakeman's Jaguar and the GT3-winning Austin-Healey 3000 of David Smithies (Chris Clarkson's, shared also by Mark Pangborn), which had the Karsten le Blanc/Nigel Greensall DD300 bearing down on it.

Event promoter Diogo Ferrao's Iberian Historic Endurance races featured their usual eclectic entry, from Datsun 1200 and Saab Sonnet through sonorous Porsche 911 RSs to Dutchman Michiel Campagne's thunderous Chevrolet Corvette Grand Sport. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, a trio of Ford GT40s prevailed each side of full-course cautions.

Leo Voyazides/Simon Hadfield bagged both victories over the home teams in the Greek's ultra-successful Plan B Motorsport car. Hadfield finished clear of Francisco Albuquerque's ASM-tended P/1024 on Saturday, then ace'd a wonderful scrap with Pedro Macedo Silva's open prototype through

**Young/Ward E-type topped GT enduro scrap**



Ward took two wins in Group 44 Jaguar XJS



constant traffic in Sunday's event closer.

Voyazides and Hadfield entertained as they came out on top in the Lola-rich Algarve 200km races, jumping between the Greek's ex-Jean-Louis Lafosse/Reine Wisell T282 and ex-Fittipaldi brothers T70 Mk3B on day one, then soloing on Sunday. The two-litre T290s of Neil Primrose and Mark Richardson led Saturday's pursuit, but a cracked bellhousing kept the Travis drummer's ex-Fredy Grainal car from the finale, in which frazzled electrics stopped Richardson's ex-Jo Bonnier example.

Invitee Chris Ward won both Historic Touring Car Challenges in JD Classics' mighty Group 44 Jaguar XJS, with Nick and Harry Whale's hard-driven BMW M3 and howling Ford GAA and Weslake V6-engined Ford Capris in its wake. Luis Barros's Ford Sierra RS500 doubled up in the national touring car events.

France's F3 Classic series was a welcome ACF addition, Monaco-domiciled Italian Valerio Leone (ex-Teo Fabi March 783) winning both races superbly from Fred Lajoux (ex-Siegfried Stohr Chevron B43) and the ex-Olivier Grouillard Martini MK39 of Eric Martin.

Outmoded Zetec-engined Formula Ford chassis are the lifeblood of the strong national Single-Seater series. Jose Pedro Faria (Mygale SJO3) won both races, pipping Miguel Matos in the opener. Goncalo Jordao jostled from fifth to second later.

The penultimate round of the Lotus 7 60th Anniversary Caterham series provided two frantic races. Both were won by Phil Jenkins in a new R300.

MARCUS PYE

GT40 duo: Voyazides/Hadfield car leads Albuquerque

## RESULTS

### MRL '50s SPORTSCARS

(53 LAPS) 1 Philip Walker/Miles

Griffiths (Lotus 15); 2 Greg

Caton (Lotus 15) +22.169s; 3 Gary

Pearson/Carlos Monteverde

(Lister-Jaguar Costin); 4 James

Cottingham/Max Girardo

(Tojeiro-Jaguar); 5 Charles Gillett/

Steve Smith (Willment-Climax);

6 Steve Boulton/Andrew

Smith (Lister-Jaguar 'flat-iron').

**Class winners** Pearson/

Monteverde; Ben Mitchell/

Gabriel and Dion Kremer (Lotus

17 Prototype); Fred Wakeman/

Patrick Blakeney-Edwards

(Cooper-Jaguar T38); Karsten

le Blanc/Nigel Greensall

(Austin-Healey 100S); Martin

Hunt/Andrew Hall (HWM-Jaguar);

Ralf Emmerling/Phil Hooper (Elva

Mk5); John Cleland (Lotus Mk6).

**Fastest lap** Griffiths 2m09.722s

(80.21mph). **Pole** Walker.

**Starters** 19.

**GT & SPORTS CAR CUP**

(51 LAPS) 1 John Young/

Chris Ward (Jaguar E-type);

2 Chris Chiles Jr/Chris Chiles Sr

(AC Cobra) +0.645s; 3 Carlos

Monteverde/Gary Pearson (AC

Cobra); 4 Pedro and Rui Macedo

Silva (AC Cobra); 5 Fred Wakeman/

Andrew Hall (Jaguar E-type);

6 Chris Clarkson/Mark Pangborn/

David Smithies (Austin-Healey

3000). **CW** Clarkson/Pangborn/

Smithies; Malcolm Paul/Wil Arif

(TVR Grantura MkIII). **FL** Julian

Thomas (Jaguar E-type)

2m09.864s (80.13mph).

**P** Thomas. **S** 28.

**IBERIAN HISTORIC ENDURANCE**

(21 LAPS) 1 Leo Voyazides/

Simon Hadfield (Ford GT40);

2 Francisco Albuquerque (Ford

GT40 P/1024) +6.363s; 3 Rui and

Pedro Macedo Silva (Ford GT40);

4 Miguel Pais do Amaral/Pedro

Bastos Rezende (Porsche 911 3.0

RS); 5 Carlos Cruz/Miguel Pais do

Amaral (Jaguar E-type); 6 Miguel

Moreno/Mario Silva (Porsche

911 3.0 RS). **CW** Pais do Amaral/

Rezende; Cruz/Pais do Amaral;

Alexandre Guimaraes/Manuel

Melo (Lotus Elan Sprint).

**FL** P Macedo Silva 2m03.723s

(84.10mph). **P** Voyazides **S** 47.

**RACE 2 (22 LAPS) 1 Voyazides/**

**Hadfield**; 2 P and R Macedo Silva

+1.574s; 3 Albuquerque; 4 Luis

Lopez/Alvaro Rodriguez (Porsche

911 3.0 RS); 5 Alfredo Martinez/

Jesus Fuster (Porsche 911 3.0 RS);

6 Moreno/Silva. **CW** Lopez/

Rodriguez; Jos Stevens (Lotus

Elan 26R); Alexis Raoux (Porsche

911 S/T); Alberto Oliveira/Filipe

Silva (Porsche 911). **FL** Hadfield

2m02.797s (84.74mph).

**P** Voyazides. **S** 43.

**ALGARVE 200KM PRE-'79**

**SPORTSCARS (21 LAPS)**

1 Leo Voyazides/Simon Hadfield

(Lola-DFV T282); 2 Simon

Hadfield/Leo Voyazides

(Lola-Chevrolet T70 Mk3B)

+9.157s; 3 Neil Primrose

(Lola-BDG T290); 4 Mark

Richardson (Lola-BDG T290);

5 Laurent Fort/Nicolas Doquin

(Crossle-BMW 9S); 6 John Taylor

(Crossle-Ford 9S). **FL** Voyazides

(T282) 1m52.099s (92.83mph).

**P** Voyazides. **S** 16.

**RACE 2 (23 LAPS) 1 Voyazides**

**(T282)**; 2 Hadfield (T70) +17.157s;

3 Fort/Doquin; 4 Taylor; 5 Gerard

Delprat/Bernard Richard

(Tiga-Ford SC79); 6 Joao Paulo

Campos Costa (Lotus-Ford 30).

**FL** Voyazides 1m51.066s

(93.69mph). **P** Voyazides. **S** 11.

**HISTORIC TOURING CAR**

**CHALLENGE (BOTH 19 LAPS)**

1 Chris Ward (Jaguar XJS);

2 Nick and Harry Whale (BMW

E30 M3) +9.446s; 3 Ric Wood/Gary

Pearson (Ford Capri); 4 Philip

Walker/Miles Griffiths (Ford Capri

RS2600); 5 Richard Postins (Rover

SD1); 6 Paul and Tom Andrew

(BMW E30 M3). **CW** Whale/Whale;

Wood/Pearson; Tony Paxman/

Malcolm Harding (Ford Escort

Mk1); Adam Brindle/Nigel Greensall

(Rover Vitesse). **FL** Ward 2m02.269s

(85.10mph). **P** Ward. **S** 34.

**RACE 2 1 Ward**; 2 Whale/Whale

+7.422s; 3 Wood; 4 Griffiths;

5 Postins; 6 Jose Sousa (BMW

635 CSI). **CW** Whale/Whale; Wood;

Postins; Mike Luck (BMW 2002 Ti).

**FL** Ward 2m03.031s (84.58mph).

**P** Ward. **S** 28.

**F3 CLASSIC (BOTH 14 LAPS)**

1 Valerio Leone (March-Toyota

783); 2 Frederic Lajoux (Chevron-

Toyota B43) +1.002s; 3 Eric Martin

(Martini-Alfa Romeo MK39);

4 Davide Leone (Ralt-VW RT3/84);

5 Pascal Gerbout (Ralt-Alfa Romeo

RT3/84); 6 Michel Arbeit (Ralt-VW

RT3/84). **FL** V Leone 1m52.750s

(92.29mph). **P** David Caussanel

(Rabraham-Ford BT41). **S** 17.

**RACE 2 1 V Leone**; 2 Lajoux

+13.223s; 3 Martin; 4 D Leone;

5 Arbeit; 6 Bernard Honnorat

(Ralt-Alfa Romeo RT3/83).

**FL** V Leone 1m54.353s

(91.00mph). **P** V Leone. **S** 15.

**SINGLE-SEATERS (9 LAPS)**

1 Jose Pedro Faria (Mygale

SJ03); 2 Miguel Matos (Mygale

SJ04) +0.861s; 3 Luis Calheiros

Ferreira (Mygale SJ01);

4 Diogo Sousa (Swift SC95Z);

5 Goncalo Jordao (Mygale SJ01);

6 Diogo Costa (Mygale SJ01).

**CW** Bernard Richard (Crossle

30F); Rui Sanches (D&D FT01);

Lukas Halusa (Lotus 20).

**P** Faria. **FL** Matos 1m59.200s

(87.30mph). **S** 29.

**RACE 2 (10 LAPS) 1 Faria**;

2 Jordao +5.616s; 3 Sousa;

4 Matos; 5 Costa; 6 Calheiros

Ferreira. **CW** Jean-Jacques

Deverly (Lola T540E); Sanches,

Richard Wilson (Lotus 27).

**FL** Faria 1m59.361s (87.18mph).

**P** Faria. **S** 28.

**LOTUS 7 60TH ANNIVERSARY**

**(BOTH 15 LAPS) 1 Phil Jenkins**;

2 Chris Wright +0.166s; 3 Simon

Cassidy; 4 Paul Browse; 5 Keith

Ashworth; 6 David Briault.

**FL** Jenkins 2m01.468s

(85.67mph). **P** Jenkins. **S** 40.

**RACE 2 1 Jenkins**; 2 Wright

+1.061s; 3 Cassidy; 4 Briault;

5 Ashworth; 6 Martin Amison.

**FL** Wright 2m01.978s (85.31mph).

**P** Jenkins. **S** 38.



Lola T282 of Voyazides leads Hadfield in the T70 they also shared

# The supports that stole the limelight

There was no shortage of excitement in a classic season for the TOCA support categories in 2016

By Stephen Lickorish, Special Correspondent

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## GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP



OUT OF ALL THE BRITISH TOURING CAR support categories, this was the closest. The showdown of the Ginetta GT4 Supercup season at Brands Hatch was a nailbiter and yet it should have been so different.

Leaving Knockhill with three race weekends remaining, Tom Wrigley's advantage appeared insurmountable at 93 points, not far off the equivalent of three victories.

But the last of the races in Scotland had started a sequence of horrendous results, with the Rob Boston Racing driver off the podium for the first time when a collision left him seventh. Next time out at Rockingham, a fuel-pump failure sabotaged Wrigley's hopes in the opener before an overambitious move on main title rival Will Burns sidelined him from race two and left him

with a grid penalty for the following round at Silverstone. Another winless weekend followed there, setting up the thrilling Brands finale...

A win and a fifth for Burns in the first two races meant Wrigley's lead had almost evaporated. Now it was just seven points: enough for him to finish one spot behind Burns to be sure of the title.

With Burns two places ahead, Wrigley had to pass Jack Mitchell, and did so with a bold, brave and brilliant move that secured him the championship by three points. The consistent Burns – who scored three wins to Wrigley's nine – was devastated, but realistically the Douglas Motorsport driver's presence in the mix was something he could not have expected a few weeks earlier.

Jamie Orton could also have been in

**Burns heads Mitchell and Wrigley in crucial Brands Hatch finale**

### STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Tom Wrigley	604
2	Will Burns	601
3	Carl Boardley	477
4	Jamie Orton	438
5	Mark Davies	392
6	Callum Pointon	373

contention if he hadn't missed the Knockhill races with the imminent birth of his first child. The seven-time winner wound up fourth in the standings, one spot behind Carl Boardley.

## PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB



The regular sight of Cammish leading the Porsche grid

THE PRESSURE WAS ON DAN CAMMISH HEADING into this season. After two dominant TOCA crowns in the past three years, anything other than a blitzing of the field would be seen as a failure.

And, sure enough, the 27-year-old Yorkshireman completed a hat-trick of titles in impressive style, taking 12 wins from the 16 races.

But the Redline Racing driver didn't have things all his own way to start with. In the first race he was stripped of his win after a track-limits penalty, handing victory to Dino Zamparelli. GT Marques racer Zamparelli remained in the wheeltracks of the reigning champion in the first half of the season.

After Cammish had a miserable Croft meeting, including his first finish off the podium since a guest appearance in 2014, Zamparelli had reduced the

### STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Dan Cammish	313
2	Dino Zamparelli	257
3	Charlie Eastwood	246
4	Tom Oliphant	199
5	Stephen Jelley	180
6	Tom Sharp	174

gap to three points heading into the summer break.

Then Cammish hit his stride. Seven wins from the final eight races netted him a comfortable title.

While Cammish is now an established star, a new one was found in scholar Charlie Eastwood. The 21-year-old learned from team-mate Cammish in the first half of the year before becoming his main rival, ending 2016 with a maiden win.

## RENAULT UK CLIO CUP

HAVING THE TWO TITLE CONTENDERS LINING up alongside each other on the front row of the grid for the final two races of the season sounds like a perfect recipe for a dramatic championship showdown. But no one could predict quite how incredible the Clio Cup conclusion between Mike Bushell and Ant Whorton-Eales would turn out to be.

The first race featured the most unexpected incident of the season, Bushell spinning off behind the safety car. He was guilty of weaving too much and threw the Clio off into the gravel. But Whorton-Eales was unable to fully capitalise as an attempted move on Paul Rivett around the outside of Paddock Hill Bend was robustly seen

**“No one could predict how incredible the Clio conclusion would be”**

off and he dropped to fourth.

Rivett played a major role in the final race too, when he came steaming down the inside of Whorton-Eales into Graham Hill Bend, spearing him off the track. Whorton-Eales controlled the slide and rejoined right into the path of the unfortunate Bushell, who was sent into the barriers and out of the race. Whorton-Eales limped home to seventh and the title.

“You think of all the possibilities that could happen but I never thought of that; every year at Brands GP my car seems to be the target!” said the champion. “I couldn't believe I tagged Mike – I was gutted to see his race end like that. I wanted to battle him on track hard and fair.”

It had been a tremendous fight all season between the pair, with each driver having the advantage in different areas.

Bushell had exceptional one-lap pace, claiming an incredible 12 poles from the 18 races. Whorton-Eales's trick was his brilliant starts and



### STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Ant Whorton-Eales	430
2	Mike Bushell	422
3	Max Coates	361
4	Paul Rivett	360
5	Lee Pattison	293
6	Josh Price	286

better racecraft. The JamSport man made fewer errors than Bushell over the year, winning nine times to his rival's three victories.

But that doesn't take into account two occasions when Bushell was stripped of the win post-race in what proved to be a controversial season. The Pyro racer missed out on victory in the second race at Thruxton because of a track-

**Whorton-Eales (10) and Bushell were inseparable for much of the season, with Rivett (r) just behind**

limits infringement, while an overly aggressive move on Whorton-Eales at Silverstone led to him being demoted to second. And those lost points made all the difference in the close title fight, with Whorton-Eales being the man to gain both times.

Three-time champion Rivett was also in contention in the early stages of the season in his WDE car, but an electrical issue at Croft and another crash with Whorton-Eales at Snetterton ruled him out by Brands. As a result of dropping back in race two in Kent, he also missed out on third in the standings, Max Coates instead completing the top three by a single point. That capped off an impressive rookie season for the Ciceley Motorsport driver.

The other drivers to win races were Paul Streather and Lee Pattison – who both had very strong starts to the year but fell a long way back by the end – and 17-year-old Josh Price, who came close to taking an impressive double win in the Brands finale. >>

GINETTA JUNIOR

LAST YEAR JAMIE CAROLINE AND SENNA PROCTOR scored the same number of points at the top of the Ginetta Junior standings. This year Will Tregurtha's advantage over Stuart Middleton was 40.

While last year's title was decided by an unsuccessful appeal to the MSA's National Court weeks after the season ended, this time Tregurtha was crowned after the penultimate weekend of racing at Silverstone.

It's clear that Tregurtha was an unusually dominant title winner, so much so that he was able to skip the final two races at Brands Hatch. But a more detailed look at the results tells a different story: one of Tregurtha's consistency and Middleton's struggles.

Middleton took more wins than his rival (seven to six) and the gap between the two was very close by the middle of the season. Then Middleton had

STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Will Tregurtha	615
2	Stuart Middleton	575
3	Lewis Brown	495
4	Dave Wooder	479
5	Daniel Harper	390
6	Geri Nicosia	384

a shocking succession of races that allowed Tregurtha to scamper away. At Snetterton it was brake issues. At Knockhill he was penalised for a jumped start. He had an off at Rockingham and then had more caliper issues at Silverstone.

Elsewhere, the quality of the rookies was much stronger this year with three (Daniel Harper, Harry King and Sebastian Priaulx) taking overall wins, with Harper just edging the battle for class honours. That bodes well for a closer season again in 2017.



Tregurtha's consistency was key to taking the Ginetta Junior title

BRITISH FORMULA 4

BRITISH FORMULA 4 IS FAST GETTING A reputation for moments of pure drama, and this year there was no shortage of events that will live long in the memory. Think team-mates James Pull and Max Fewtrell colliding at Thruxton, with Fewtrell rolling onto the barriers. Think team-mates Petru Florescu and Devlin DeFrancesco colliding at Knockhill and then Florescu starting a boxing match. Think Billy Monger missing out on a super maiden win on the last lap at Rockingham with car trouble. And then there was that dramatic final race at Brands Hatch, when Fewtrell claimed the championship from Sennan Fielding.

The last race of the year was a tense affair, with Fewtrell needing to outscore Fielding by four points. Fielding started sixth and set about

**“Fewtrell and Fielding were two of six drivers still in title contention”**

storming up the order with a series of impressive moves, but then got stuck behind second-placed Ayrton Simmons.

Up front, Fewtrell was in control, and – despite a brief slide at Stirlings early on – the Carlin racer won the title in style with a crucial victory.

“A lot of hard work went into this season,” said JHR Developments ace Fielding, who has since been selected as a finalist for the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award. “I gave it my all but I was just really gutted for my team and family.

“I think people recognised the job we did with the car we had, and it's taught me how to develop the car, which is important to become a professional racing driver.”

Fewtrell and Fielding were just two of six drivers still with a chance of claiming the title at Brands, but Luis Leeds, Pull, DeFrancesco and



Alex Quinn were all unable to pick up the results they needed. In fact, the Kent weekend was the season in a nutshell.

Consistent Fewtrell picked up three podiums, reflecting his brilliant record of finishes in the top three. Fielding scored some good results but not in every race, mirroring his up-and-down season with the small JHR squad, while the other title contenders had varying fortunes over the races. There was also a slightly surprising winner in the form of Fortec's Jamie Caroline, who finally took his maiden victory after months of waiting.

As for early points leader Florescu – the Romanian Carlin driver had an impressive first half of the season, claiming four wins – his title bid was irreparably damaged by his Knockhill antics and his subsequent exclusion from the meeting.

A more impressive element of the season was

Fewtrell leads Simmons and Fielding in that crucial final race of the season

STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	POINTS
1	Max Fewtrell	358
2	Sennan Fielding	351
3	Luis Leeds	300
4	James Pull	291v
5	Devlin DeFrancesco	265
6	Petru Florescu	260

the number of different race winners. Ten drivers triumphed across the year, with Zane Goddard – who claimed a notable four wins in the second half of the year – and Rafael Martins also in the winners' circle.

## AUTOSPORT'S TOP 10 DRIVERS



### 1 DAN CAMMISH

Cammish won three quarters of the Porsche Carrera Cup GB races this year. The next highest percentage for any of the drivers in the TOCA support categories is Ant Whorton-Eales on 50%. That is why the Redline driver is top of the TOCA-supports tree for a second year in succession. After his dominance last season, few expected Cammish to have such superiority again, but instead he was even more impressive, breaking the record for most wins in a Carrera Cup season with 12 victories. A tough Croft and a spin at Brands Hatch reminded everyone that he is still human.



### 2 ANT WHORTON-EALES

It's one thing to make a brilliant getaway a few times over the course of a season. But it takes a very special driver to consistently make superb starts in virtually every race. Whorton-Eales's Clio Cup rivals didn't stand a chance off the line – there were numerous memorable launches from the champion, but perhaps the best was his surge from 10th to second on the first lap at Rockingham. Not only did he make good starts, once he got ahead his racecraft was very impressive too. Winning half the races in a series as competitive as the Clio Cup is a major achievement.



### 3 SENNAN FIELDING

Third may seem very high for a driver who failed to win a title, but Fielding's performances make him more than deserving of such a lofty ranking. To finish just seven points adrift of F4 champion Max Fewtrell is a good achievement in itself. But it's an even greater one when you consider that Fewtrell drove for Carlin and Fielding for the tiny-in-comparison JHR squad. In theory, JHR shouldn't end up that close to the mighty Carlin, but it's testament to Fielding's skill behind the wheel that it was so tight. Winning almost double the number of races of Fewtrell was also impressive.



### 4 WILL TREGURTHA

To wrap up any title with a weekend to spare is some achievement. But to win a series as unpredictable as Ginetta Junior at that stage is even more noteworthy. Tregurtha was faultless for much of the season and it was his ability to continually pick up a good haul of points that allowed him to skip the final Brands Hatch races. Even when he didn't have race-winning pace, he still made sure of a top-six result. In fact, only once did he finish lower than sixth – a 10th in race one at Croft when he was punted off at the first corner – and that's the sign of a true champion.



### 5 MIKE BUSHELL

Stepping back from the British Touring Car Championship to the Clio Cup was a bold move by 2014 champion Bushell. It meant there was a lot of pressure and expectation on him to secure a second title. But things didn't go to plan to begin with as it wasn't until the seventh race of the year that he finally got his first victory. He then went on a run of podiums that propelled him into the points lead, but ultimately he was unable to match Whorton-Eales and lost out in dramatic style at Brands. Finishing second to Whorton-Eales by just eight points is not to be sniffed at.



### 6 MAX FEWTRELL

Consistency wins you titles and it's therefore no surprise that Fewtrell came away with the British F4 crown. He scored comfortably more podiums than any other driver and that proved to be the difference in his battle with Fielding. He was also incredibly impressive to take victory in the Brands finale when under massive pressure. But the reason why Fewtrell is not higher on this list is his lack of standout performances, apart from the finale. He won only three races all season – fewer than Double R's Zane GoDDard, who was eighth in the standings – on his way to the title.



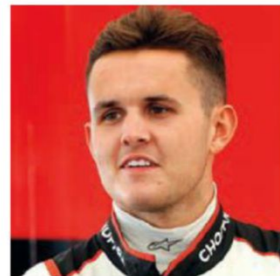
### 7 TOM WRIGLEY

By the middle of the season, Wrigley looked set to be the most comfortable of all the BTCC-support-series champions, with a huge points lead. But in the end he had the narrowest advantage of all of them, only taking the GT4 Supercup crown by three points. Wrigley was imperious in the first half of the year, with his hat-trick of wins at Donington Park the highlight. It should've been all over by Silverstone. But the way that lead was wiped out (a key cause being the terrible attempted pass on Burns at Rockingham) is why he is the lowest-ranked champion.



### 8 WILL BURNS

It's amazing how seemingly irrelevant clashes can have a big impact on the outcome of a title. For example, had Burns not collided with Jamie Orton in the sixth race of the year, he might have been champion. Instead, he finished 11th in that race and missed out on the GT4 title. The way Burns never gave up chasing a seemingly lost cause, slashing Wrigley's massive lead at Rockingham, was very impressive. Equally so is the fact that he finished every single race of the season and was just twice outside the top five. But in the end it just wasn't quite enough.



### 9 CHARLIE EASTWOOD

Eastwood achieved his target for 2016. He wanted to win the Carrera Cup rookie class in his first season outside single-seaters, and he did so comfortably. But he did so much more than just that. In the second half of the year he became Cammish's main rival, constantly in the wheeltracks of the champion, and took his maiden win at Brands Hatch at the final meeting. But what was most impressive about his debut season was that he never put a foot wrong. It all bodes very well for year two of his scholarship programme in the series next year.



### 10 STUART MIDDLETON

It could've ended very differently for Middleton this year. The Ginetta Junior runner-up actually claimed more wins than champion Tregurtha and, but for a series of car troubles and disappointing weekends in the second half of the season, the final standings would have been much closer. But what was perhaps most impressive about Middleton was the way in which he responded to Tregurtha winning the title at Silverstone. He was right at the front at the Brands Hatch finale, taking a brilliant last-gasp win in race one.

# WHAT'S ON

## Motorsport's Whicker won't stop his



Mowlem in IMSA action this year at Lime Rock

NOT MANY RACING DRIVERS HAVE television programmes dedicated to them, making *Johnny Mowlem's Racing Travels*, which was first broadcast 18 years ago, an anomaly.

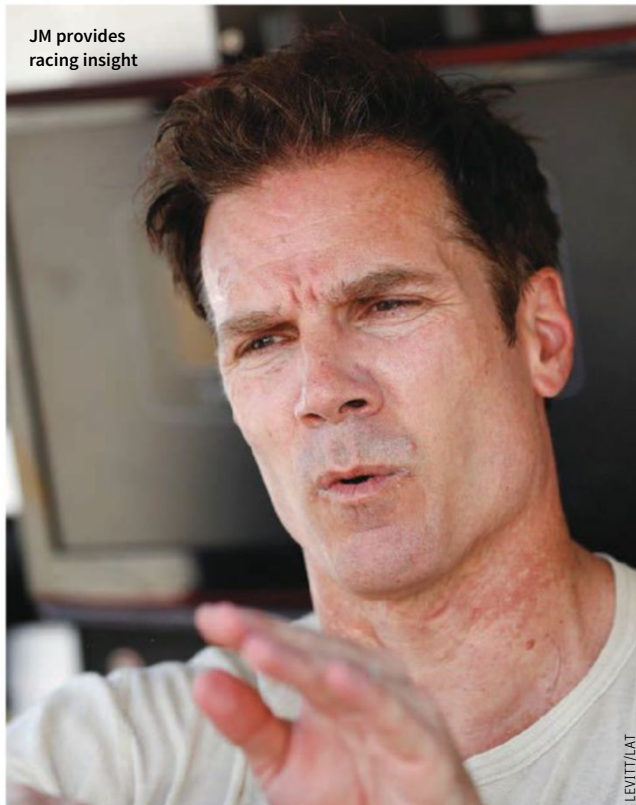
More so when you consider that Mowlem, whose long professional career came to a close at the end of the 2016 season, is one of the lower-profile British drivers who are paid to race.

"It started way back at the end of 1997, after I won all of the races in the British Porsche Cup," says Mowlem. "I used that as a springboard to do Porsche Supercup in 1998. The launch was at the AFN Park Lane dealership and one of the people invited was Roger Moody, then head of programming at Sky Sports. I was the only British driver in the Supercup and he thought this would be a cool story."

This led to the creation of what was initially called *Johnny Mowlem's World Travels*, with Andrew Marriott putting the programme together.

This week, the latest episode will go out on Sky Sports, with the indefatigable Marriott still running the show. While the initial focus was on Mowlem's attempts to make it as a professional driver, and then his exploits once he had

JM provides racing insight



LEVITT/LAT

done so, it rapidly became a way to show fans behind the scenes of racing.

The latest 30-minute programme, the third of this series, includes a visit to the Porsche Human Performance Centre at Silverstone, where Mowlem is put through his paces physically. Coverage includes his final professional race at Petit Le Mans, victory in the GT Cup race at Snetterton and the final round of the Michelin GT3 Cup at Estoril. That the programme also takes a look at racing boot technology with Adidas and racing underwear with Walero shows the broad scope of the show, although it has always attempted to get into the unseen details of racing.

"That's why it proves so popular," says Mowlem of the unusual nature of the programme. "It isn't something aimed at Lewis Hamilton or Jenson Button, but I've always tried to make it interesting and a true behind-the-scenes look at racing. When we started doing that, it was really unusual."

While Mowlem doesn't believe the programme has played a massive role in his long-term professional employment, he is surprised by the response to it.

"It certainly hasn't hurt me because

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# travels

it's great to have a programme like this that raises your profile," he says. "But if I hadn't had it, I don't think it would change things.

"It definitely increases your notoriety, if you like, among fans, but it's difficult to say it's made a big difference.

"Then again, I get so many people mentioning that they liked a certain thing I did in it, so maybe it has a bigger impact than I thought."

You might think that, with Mowlem calling time on his professional career, that would be the end of it. But he plans to keep going in 2017, when his focus will be on his driver coaching and mentoring company, Red River Sports.

"The programme has changed over the years, and I like to make it more about the people rather than just being me," says Mowlem. "There's no reason why it can't continue alongside Red River. I'd like to make it so the only 'Mowlem' bit is me presenting."

The latest *Johnny Mowlem's Racing Travels* will be broadcast on November 8 at 1900 and 2230 (Sky Sports 4); and on November 9 at 0200 (SS4), and 1030 and 1700 (Sky Sports 3).

EDD STRAW



## HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube 'HE'S SHOUTING JUST LIKE A CHILD'

**Search for: War Of Words: Verstappen, Vettel, Ricciardo**

Max Verstappen, Sebastian Vettel and Daniel Ricciardo voice their opinions in the aftermath of the Mexican Grand Prix. It's the Dutch teenager who's most outspoken, although we'd imagine Vettel might have been less measured if this had been recorded *after* he was handed a 10-second penalty.



XPB IMAGES

TV PICK  
OF THE  
WEEK

### WEC SIX HOURS OF SHANGHAI

LIVE MOTORS TV, Sunday 0230

BT SPORT 1 from 0430

The news is out that Audi will quit the World Endurance Championship at the end of the 2016 season, but before that its two LMP1 crews still have a campaign to complete. And for the drivers of the #8 car – Oliver Jarvis, Lucas di Grassi and Loic Duval – there's also still the chance to end their service with the German manufacturer with a title to their names. Make sure you're up nice and early to catch all of the action from the penultimate round of the season at the Shanghai International Circuit on Sunday.

## INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

### FORMULA V8 3.5

Rd 9/9

Circuit de Barcelona  
Catalunya, Spain

November 5-6

### EUROFORMULA OPEN

Rd 8/8

Circuit de Barcelona  
Catalunya, Spain

November 5-6

### WATCH ON TV

Live Motors TV, Saturday  
1405, Sunday 1205

Live BT Sport 2, Saturday  
1400, Sunday 1200

### INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN

Rd 7/7

Circuit de Barcelona  
Catalunya, Spain

November 5-6

### WATCH ON TV

Live Motors TV, Saturday  
1500, Sunday 1300  
Live BT Sport 2, Saturday  
1500, Sunday 1300

### AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS

Rd 13/14

Pukekohe, New Zealand

November 4-6

### WATCH ON TV

Live BT Sport 2, Saturday

0330, Sunday 0315

### NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 34/36

Texas Motor Speedway,  
USA  
November 6

### WATCH ON TV

Live Premier Sports,  
Sunday 1930

### V8 STOCK CARS

Rd 10/12

Goiania, Brazil

November 6

### SUPER TC2000

Rd 11/12

General Roca,  
Argentina  
November 6

## UK MOTORSPORT

### SILVERSTONE HSCC WALTER HAYES TROPHY

November 5-6  
FF1600, Allcomers,  
Open Wheel, Closed  
Wheel, Clubmans

### BRANDS HATCH BARC

November 5-6  
Trucks, Legends, Pickups,  
Intermarque, Saloons,  
Tin Tops



WALTER HAYES  
TROPHY

EBREY





Agip  
GOODYEAR

28

GOODYEAR

FIAT

G. BERGER

Agip

SKF speedline WEBER

MAGNETI MARELLI



## THE ARCHIVE

Gerhard Berger was running in third place and being harried by team-mate Nigel Mansell when his Ferrari 640 was launched into the air after a puncture pitched it over the kerbs at Hockenheim's first chicane on lap 14 of the 1989 German Grand Prix.

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# THE BUCKET LIST

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ALL PICS: NICK DUNGAN/PHOTOGRAPHY

**C**HARLOTTE, 1997. I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I SAW A NASCAR RACE like it was yesterday. Jeff Gordon brought a Jurassic Park-liveried rocket that was so far ahead of the rules that it dominated, and NASCAR politely asked Hendrick Motorsports to never bring the car back again. It only ran once.

Almost 19 years on, the chance arose to head up to Corby, get into a real-life NASCAR and drive it, alone, around Rockingham Motor Speedway.

Driving on an oval in a heavy stock car is something everyone should get the chance to experience. The secret to it all is weight transfer, loading the car up at the front end through the corners to get the benefit of the downforce.

The g-force is incredible – through the turns, you can actually feel yourself being jammed down into your seat, not unlike banking heavily in a commercial aircraft.

I was piloting a Chevrolet Impala, an Xfinity series chassis driven by Brendan Gaughan. To keep costs down, the American Race Car Experience we drove with used small-block Chevys, but the power delivery is similar. The smile-per-mile factor is similar too.

The car has a radio system and, for the full experience of NASCAR, I had my very own crew chief-turned-'spotter' to tell me when cars were approaching. That's another thing that's surprising in the cockpit – the lack of vision. How the drivers compete at over 200mph, inches away from each other, at Daytona is even more difficult to understand after being behind the wheel.

On the day there were other cars circling, so there was a real thrill to being on track, particularly with the inability to see where they were.

It all adds up to laughing at the people who claim that, because NASCAR drivers only turn left, they are inferior to other drivers. Most of them are just as fit and go through tough conditions in a race too. You can only really appreciate that when you've driven the tough-to-tame beasts. *W*

**JACK BENYON 'JUNIOR'**

You only truly appreciate the skill needed to drive a NASCAR when behind the wheel

## AT A GLANCE

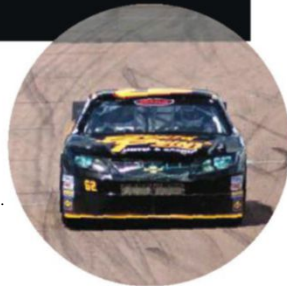
**Where** Several locations in the US, while Rockingham is possible but not running at present.

**When** Generally, there's freedom depending where you book it and with whom.

**Cost** ARCX started from around £50 for the basic package, but the company's taking a sabbatical for now. If you go to the States, you have the choice of 14 different

circuits and a range of options from riding along to getting behind the wheel yourself.

**Key tip** Do your research. Don't cause a 28-car pile-up.



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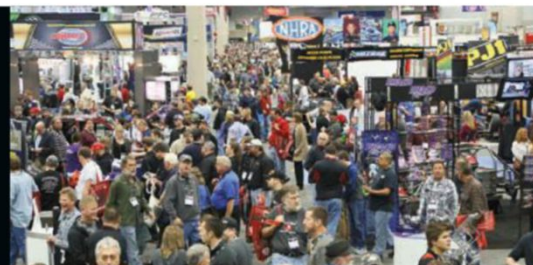


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